



The United States Agency for International Development

Evaluation of the USAID Cuba Program

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The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) hired PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC) in February 2000 to conduct an evaluation of the USAID Cuba Program. The Program originated in October of 1995 when President Clinton announced a series of measures to encourage a peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba. From 1996 to April 2000, USAID awarded \$6,419,275 to 15 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and three universities in the United States to increase the free flow of accurate information on democracy and human rights to, from, and within Cuba. The Program has supported activities in six areas: 1) building solidarity with Cuba's human rights activists, 2) planning for transition, 3) giving voice to Cuba's independent journalists, 4) defending the rights of Cuban workers, 5) helping develop independent Cuban NGOs, and 6) providing direct outreach to the Cuban people. Over the course of four months, a three-member PwC evaluation team reviewed Cuba Program grantee files and interviewed nearly 100 individuals from grantee organizations, U.S. Government agencies, think tanks, and academia.

USAID expends approximately \$500 million per year on 72 country and regional programs that support democracy and good governance. The vast majority of USAID-funded democracy programs are carried out collaboratively with the governments in the countries where activities take place. The USAID Cuba Program is one of a few exceptional cases for several reasons: the Government of Cuba prohibits pro-democracy activity within Cuba and works to thwart the USAID Cuba Program; the United States and Cuba do not maintain diplomatic relations; and U.S. law prohibits assistance to the Government of Cuba and its dependencies. As a result of these obstacles, Program grantees have encountered difficulty in their efforts to identify Cuban partners and to promote the free flow of information to, from, and within Cuba.

Despite these difficulties, the evaluation team believes that the USAID Cuba Program and its grantees have demonstrated the potential to contribute to a peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba. While the Program is only a small part of the U.S. Government's approach to Cuba, USAID's encouragement of democratic change in Cuba provides sustenance and information to important actors on the island, within the international community, and to several U.S. civil society organizations that are helping people within Cuba today.

The evaluation team believes USAID's administration of the Cuba Program to be satisfactory and effective, particularly in recognition of the fact that it takes place in such a difficult political context and is subjected to constant crosscutting pressures. The Program would benefit from an increase in staff at USAID headquarters and in Havana, the adoption of a research agenda to guide planning and to inform Program activities, expanded information sharing and cooperation among grantees, and improved measurement of Program performance.



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Evaluation Overview and Methodology

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Evaluation Overview and Methodology

At the request of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP conducted an evaluation of the Agency's Cuba Program. The evaluation was conducted under the aegis of the Support for Economic Growth and Institutional Reform (SEGIR) Contract, specifically under the General Business, Trade and Investment component. The evaluation was carried out from February to May 2000.

USAID contracted with PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP to:

- ▶ assess the effectiveness of the current Cuba Program,
- ▶ make recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the Program, and
- ▶ assess the compliance of grantees with the conditions of their grants.

A three-member evaluation team conducted in-depth interviews of USAID, State Department and other U.S. executive branch officials who are familiar with the Program, as well as informed congressional staff and experts on Cuba. In addition, the team conducted structured, in-depth interviews of the USAID Cuba Program grantees, examined their work products, and reviewed the extensive information related to their grants on file at USAID. The team also reviewed a variety of press reports and secondary sources related to the Program. Finally, the team interviewed several representatives of think tanks and academic institutions not currently associated with the Program. A list of persons interviewed can be found in Appendix B.

The final version of this report was delivered to the USAID Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean on July 21, 2000.

Limitations of the Evaluation

While any evaluation is limited by the constraints of time and available resources, the evaluation team faced three hurdles in determining the effectiveness of the Cuba Program:

- ▶ **Time-delayed Program Impact.** Because many Cuba Program activities are designed to lay the groundwork for a transition in Cuba, much of the Program's impact cannot be measured at such an early stage. As Thomas Carothers argues in his recent book, "many of the most important results of democracy programs are psychological, moral, subjective, indirect and time-delayed." ¹
- ▶ **Lack of Cooperation from the Cuban Government.** Promoting democracy on its face would appear to be something that should be pursued out in the open. Nevertheless, the repressive environment maintained by the Government of Cuba imposes the necessity of extremely discreet operational methods, which in turn frustrate evaluation of Program activities. The Government of Cuba's antagonism toward USAID's Cuba Program and

Program grantees hampers the efforts of the Agency, its partners, and this evaluation team to gather important information pertaining to Program effectiveness. Further, the team believes that Program clients would be placed in jeopardy if it were to engage in client-satisfaction interviews, surveys, end-use reviews, or similar evaluation techniques within Cuba itself. All of the team's work was performed within the United States.

- ▶ **No Access to Classified U.S. Government Documents.** The evaluation team did not have access to classified U.S. Government documents relating to the Cuba Program.
- ▶ **Varying Location of Activities.** The closer a partner's work gets to or inside of Cuba, the more difficult, risky, and costly it is to carry out that work. Similarly, the closer a partner's work gets to or inside of Cuba, the more difficult and more costly it is to evaluate with respect to either efficacy or compliance. The evaluation team has found much of the work of Program partners well beyond the scope of our assessment resources primarily due to lack of access to clients and limited contact with Cuba. Off-island activities (e.g. work in third countries, building or cooperating with U.S.-based NGOs, and information gathering and analysis) are generally easier to carry out, monitor, and evaluate than on-island work. However, off-island work probably has a less direct and less evident impact upon Cuban society and politics as well as a longer lag time for effects to be detected.

Despite these obstacles, the evaluation team was able to carry out its work through the appraisal of Cuba Program work products; in-depth face-to-face interviews with Program administrators, grantees, and other key informants; telephone interviews, examination of Cuba Program grantee files; and a review of relevant secondary sources.

Evaluation Team

The PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP evaluation team was composed of John Booth, Juan Rial, and Chris Siddall. Siddall served as team leader.

- ▶ John Booth specializes in political participation, democracy, and democratization in Latin America. For nearly 25 years, he has conducted in-depth research on these issues and written several books and articles focused on democratization in Latin America. Currently, Booth is a professor of political science at the University of North Texas. He has also taught graduate-level courses on democracy and democratization, Latin American politics, revolution and political violence, and models of democracy.
- ▶ Juan Rial has 14 years of experience in providing expertise on democracy and governance issues in emerging democracies. His primary areas of focus include democratization, development of civil society, civil-military relations, trade unions, strengthening of judicial and legislative institutions, anti-corruption measures, and civic education. Rial has extensive experience in Latin America, having worked in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, the Dominican Republic, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay. He served as an advisor to Uruguayan President Julio Maria Sanguinetti on civil-military relations and constitutional reform from 1985 to 1989 and from 1995 to 1997. He has also served as an advisor in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the West Bank and Gaza, Malawi, Mozambique, Angola, Burundi, Equatorial Guinea, Rwanda, and East Timor. Rial is a Permanent Resident of the United States and a citizen of Uruguay and Spain.
- ▶ Chris Siddall has 10 years of experience with projects designed to strengthen judicial, legal, and regulatory frameworks for democratic institutions and market-based economies. He is a member of the PricewaterhouseCoopers Integrated Managing for Results team that is working to advance strategic planning, performance measurement, and evaluation methodology throughout the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Structure of the Report

This report includes three sections and two appendices. The [first section](#) provides an overview of the USAID Cuba Program, grantee activities, and key Program actors. The [second section](#) examines overall Program effectiveness and the compliance of grantees with their grant agreements. The [final section](#) of the report provides recommendations that the evaluation team believes would enhance the effectiveness of the Cuba Program. [Appendix A](#) briefly describes the activities of individual grantees and highlights their successes as well as obstacles that they have faced during Program implementation. [Appendix B](#) lists persons interviewed during the course of the evaluation.

¹ *Aiding Democracy Abroad*: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: Washington, D.C. 1999, p. 340.



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Profile of the USAID Cuba Program

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Profile of the USAID Cuba Program

Program Overview and Funding Authority

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is the principal U.S. federal agency implementing America's foreign economic and humanitarian assistance programs around the world. Since 1961, USAID has extended assistance to countries recovering from disaster, working to alleviate poverty, and engaging in democratic reforms.

USAID expends approximately \$500 million per year on 72 country and regional programs that support democracy and good governance.² Pro-democracy activities range from enhancing the capacity of state institutions to supporting grassroots civic education campaigns. With some notable exceptions, the vast majority of USAID-funded democracy and good governance programs are carried out collaboratively and with the consent of the governments in the countries where activities take place. For a variety of reasons detailed in this report, the Cuba Program is an exceptional case. USAID's Cuba Program was established under the *Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 (Section 1705g)*, and the *Cuban Liberty and Democratic (LIBERTAD) Solidarity Act of 1996 (Section 109a)*-widely known as the *Helms-Burton Act*. Arising from longstanding conflictual relations between the United States and the Government of Cuba since 1959, the *Helms-Burton Act* states that:

The repression of the Cuban people, including a ban on free and fair democratic elections, and continuing violations of fundamental human rights, have isolated the Cuban regime as the only completely nondemocratic government in the Western Hemisphere...The totalitarian nature of the Castro regime has deprived the Cuban people of any peaceful means to improve their condition and has led thousands of Cuban citizens to risk or lose their lives in dangerous attempts to escape Cuba to freedom...The consistent policy of the United States toward Cuba since the beginning of the Castro regime, carried out by both Democratic and Republican administrations, has sought to keep faith with the people of Cuba, and has been effective in sanctioning the totalitarian regime...The Congress has historically and consistently manifested its solidarity and the solidarity of the American people with the democratic aspirations of the Cuban people.

Pursuant to these findings, the Helms-Burton Act states that the policy of the United States includes the following goals:

To encourage the Cuban people to empower themselves with a government which reflects the self-determination of the Cuban people...To recognize the potential for a difficult transition from the current regime in Cuba...[And] in solidarity with the Cuban people to provide appropriate forms of assistance...to facilitate a peaceful transition to representative democracy and a market economy in Cuba and to consolidate democracy in Cuba.

In October 1995, President Clinton announced a series of measures to encourage peaceful transition to a free and open society in Cuba. The President stated that the U.S. would promote democracy and the free flow of ideas, and would increase the ability of Americans and U.S. non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to contribute to the strengthening of Cuban civil society. From 1996 to April 2000, the USAID Cuba Program has made grant awards totaling \$6,419,275 to 15 U.S. NGOs and three universities.

USAID's Cuba Program supports the U.S. foreign policy goal of promoting a peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba by encouraging the development of Cuban civil society. Its strategy is to "increase the free flow of accurate information on democracy, human rights, and free enterprise development to, from and within Cuba."³

The USAID grants were awarded pursuant to the authority provided in the *Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 (Section 1705g)*, which permits the U.S. Government to provide assistance "through appropriate non-governmental organizations, for the support of individuals and organizations to promote nonviolent democratic change in Cuba." The *Helms-Burton Act (Section 109a)* further details the types of assistance and support the President is authorized to provide for individuals and independent NGOs to support democracy-building efforts for Cuba, including:

- ▶ Published and informational matter—such as books, videos, and cassettes—on transitions to democracy, human rights and market economies, to be made available to independent democratic groups in Cuba;
- ▶ Humanitarian assistance to victims of political repression, as well as their families;
- ▶ Support for democratic and human rights groups in Cuba; and
- ▶ Support for visits and permanent deployment of independent international human rights monitors in Cuba.

Constraints on the Program

As stated earlier, there are several reasons why USAID cannot work cooperatively or in collaboration with the Government of Cuba and its dependencies to promote democracy as it does with governments in other countries:

- ▶ **No Diplomatic Relations.** The United States does not have full diplomatic relations with Cuba and maintains an embargo on most trade between the United States and the island.
- ▶ **U.S. Law.** In addition, U.S. legislation, including the *Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 (Section 1705g)* and *Helms-Burton Act*, prohibits most direct assistance to the Cuban government and its dependencies (including many government-sponsored, government-established, or Communist party-affiliated non-governmental organizations).
- ▶ **Cuban Law.** Finally, in 1999 the Cuban government enacted legislation making it a crime for Cuban citizens to cooperate with the activities authorized by the *Helms-Burton Act*. Cooperation is punishable with prison terms of eight to 20 years. This legislation and the extensive control of the Government of Cuba over organizations with which USAID regularly works to promote democracy in other countries, such as trade unions, political parties, NGOs, professional associations, and women's groups limits the activities that can be undertaken through the Cuba Program.

Several constraints complicate the USAID Cuba Program's implementation, monitoring, and evaluation:

- ▶ **Overt Nature of the Program.** First, during the decades of the Cold War, U.S. efforts to

promote U.S. foreign policy in the closed societies of the Communist bloc were carried out in substantial part by agencies that operated covertly. In contrast, the USAID Cuba Program, parts of which appear to be modeled on the Eastern European transition experience, operates publicly and openly, subjecting it and its grantees to counter pressures, criticism, policy debates, and occasionally complicating publicity.

- ▶ **Communication with Cubans.** Second, communication with the Cuban people in person, by mail, and by electronic means is difficult and costly. Cooperation with and by Cubans on the island is logistically difficult and entails risk.
- ▶ **Range of Cuban Partners.** Finally, the Program must work with truly independent NGOs and individuals rather than directly with the Government of Cuba and its dependencies and affiliates. Since the Government of Cuba dominates so many aspects of Cuban society, robust independent partners are few. Those independent groups that do exist in Cuba face constant government harassment as they carry out their activities.

Program Grantees

The USAID Cuba Program was inaugurated in 1996 with a grant to Freedom House, and then expanded in 1997 to include 18 grantees. To date, the Program has grown to a total of \$8,299,423 in active and completed grants. This evaluation reviews only the \$6,419,275 in grants awarded as of April 2000. Several additional grant proposals from current and prospective grantees were in review at the time of this evaluation. Several of these grants are now being made by USAID. Projected funding for Fiscal Year 2001 is \$5 million.

The USAID Cuba Program works with three types of grantees, all of which operate on a not-for-profit basis: 1) Cuba-focused organizations, 2) NGOs with a Latin America and Caribbean or global focus, and 3) universities. Some of these organizations have had little experience implementing U.S. Government-funded international development activities, while others have worked directly with the U.S. Government for many years. All Program grantees limit themselves to peaceful means of encouraging democratic transition in Cuba. The section below lists past and present Cuba Program grantees and the primary focus of their activities.

Working toward Six Program Results

- ▶ The goal of the USAID Cuba Program is to "promote a peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba by assisting the development of Cuban civil society." The strategic objective of the Program is to develop the "free flow of accurate information on democracy, human rights, and free market economics to, from, and within Cuba."⁴ Within this objective, the Program works to achieve six intermediate results⁵ in service to the overarching goal and objective:⁶
- ▶ **Building Solidarity with Cuba's Human Rights Activists.** The Government of Cuba has long been criticized by the United Nations and diverse human rights monitoring organizations for violating the fundamental human rights of its citizens. The USAID Cuba Program provides moral support, information, and limited food and medical aid to Cuban political prisoners and their families, and to the island's human rights activists. Assistance includes providing pens, papers, books, typewriters, fax machines and other communications equipment. \$3.65 million, or more than one half of total Cuba Program funding, has been distributed to the organizations for the purpose of building solidarity with Cuba's human rights activists. Under this intermediate result, USAID has provided the following grants:

Grantee: The Center for a Free Cuba

Funding: \$900,000

Activities: The Center for a Free Cuba gathers and disseminates information concerning the human rights situation in Cuba, transmits the writings of Cuban human rights activists to non-governmental organizations worldwide, sponsors travel to Cuba by representatives of

democratic societies, and distributes pro-democracy literature on the island.

Grantee: Cuban Dissidence Task Group

Funding: \$250,000

Activities: The Cuban Dissidence Task Group published and disseminated worldwide the written analysis of Cuban democratic activists on the island. The Task Group provided humanitarian assistance (food and medicine) to political prisoners and their families, and to other victims of Cuban government oppression.

Grantee: Freedom House

Funding: \$775,000

Activities: Under the \$500,000 Transitions Project, Freedom House provided 40,000 Spanish-language books, pamphlets and other materials to the Cuban people on issues such as human rights, transition to democracy and free market economics. Through the Cuban Democracy Project, funded at \$275,000, Freedom House promotes the formation of civic and political leadership in Cuba by linking professional organizations in Cuba to one another and to those in free democracies in Europe, North America, and elsewhere.

Grantee: The Institute for Democracy in Cuba

Funding: \$1,000,000

Activities: The Institute assists democratic activists in Cuba, informs the Cuban people, gathers and disseminates information from inside Cuba on human rights, and provides food and medicine to political prisoners, their families, and other victims of oppression.

Grantee: International Republican Institute

Funding: \$725,000

Activities: The International Republican Institute helps to create and bolster international solidarity committees in Latin America and Europe in order to provide material, moral, and ideological support for democratic activists in Cuba.

- ▶ **Planning for Transition.** The evaluation of possible transition scenarios and attendant problems for Cuba is preparation for the future. Seeking to shape eventual changes in the government and economy of Cuba, the USAID Cuba Program has issued grants for studies and prospective analyses. The grantees that have conducted transition analysis include the International Foundation for Election Systems, Rutgers University, and the U.S.-Cuba Business Council. \$802,000 has been provided for transition planning.

Grantee: International Foundation for Election Systems

Funding: \$136,000

Activities: The International Foundation for Election Systems analyzed assistance required to support transitional elections in Cuba. Without discussing or considering the possible timing of elections, the study established guidelines, costs, and options concerning international assistance and the requirements for local administration of comprehensive voter registration and conduct of free and fair presidential and congressional elections in Cuba. Since May 2000, USAID has disseminated the report's findings to the Cuban people and international community.

Grantee: Rutgers University

Funding: \$99,000

Activities: Rutgers supports planning for future assistance to a Cuban transition government and, eventually, to a democratically elected government in Cuba. The University transmits planning results to the Cuban people.

Grantee: U.S.-Cuba Business Council

Funding: \$567,000

Activities: The U.S.-Cuba Business Council surveys U.S. private sector resources and plans to assist the eventual reconstruction of the Cuban economy. The Council conducts a conference series on Cuba's democratic free market future.

- ▶ **Giving Voice to Cuba's Independent Journalists.** The Inter-American Press Association and human rights monitoring organizations criticize the Government of Cuba for restricting freedom of the press and the free flow of information. Cuba's few independent journalists, almost all political dissidents, suffer from loss of employment, legal harassment, and intimidation. Improved telephone communications and international visits permit some information to flow into and out of Cuba despite Cuban government efforts. The Program supports the publication abroad of the work of independent journalists from the island, and also works to distribute their writings within Cuba. A total of \$670,000 has been provided to three grantees.

Grantee: Cuba Free Press

Funding: \$280,000

Activities: Cuba Free Press publishes the work of professional and independent writers and journalists inside Cuba.

Grantee: CubaNet

Funding: \$98,000

Activities: CubaNet is expanding its comprehensive internet on-line coverage of Cuba's independent journalists, and other national and international press reports on Cuban human rights and economic issues.

Grantee: Florida International University-International Media Center

Funding: \$292,000

Activities: The FIU International Media Center (IMC) trains Cuba's independent journalists to help improve their professional skills.

- ▶ **Defending the Rights of Cuban Workers.** The Communist party-affiliated Cuban Workers Confederation (CTC) dominates the island's organized labor and supports regime policies and practices harmful to workers' rights in direct contravention to international labor treaties. Despite the dominance of the CTC, several tiny independent labor groups have emerged. USAID Program grantees seeking to advance Cuban workers' rights, encourage independent unions, and promote international better business practices by foreign firms investing in Cuba include the American Center for International Labor Solidarity and the National Policy Association. A total of \$393,575 has been provided for work in this area.

Grantee: The American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS)

Funding: \$168,575

Activities: ACILS works with trade union movements worldwide to persuade foreign firms to respect the rights of Cuban workers in their operations inside Cuba. ACILS works to monitor the firms' performance and to train leaders of emerging independent associations of Cuban workers.

Grantee: The National Policy Association

Funding: \$225,000

Activities: The National Policy Association formed an international private sector working group to encourage companies doing business in Cuba to respect the rights of Cuban workers and to promote democracy. NPA conducted a conference on labor rights in Mexico City in June 2000.

- ▶ **Helping Develop Independent Cuban NGOs.** The political space available for independent civil society remains severely constricted by the enormous scope of Cuba's centralized government and its repressive regime. The USAID Program seeks to promote the formation and growth of fully independent NGOs in Cuba, especially grassroots, professional, and environmental organizations. The two grantees working directly in this Program area have received \$408,700.

Grantee: Pan American Development Foundation

Funding: \$236,700

Activities: The Pan American Development Foundation works to establish environmental linkages between Cuban NGOs and counterpart NGOs operating elsewhere in the Americas to demonstrate how NGOs function within democratic societies to help conserve, manage, and protect natural resources.

Grantee: Partners of the Americas

Funding: \$172,000

Activities: Partners of the Americas helped establish professional and institutional linkages between emerging Cuban community grassroots and professional organizations, cooperatives, and other counterpart organizations around the world.

- ▶ **Providing Direct Outreach to the Cuban People.** Cubans have highly restricted access to information, including limits on both high-technology communication and interpersonal and mass communications methods. Increasing the flow of information into Cuba faces many challenges from Cuban security's monitoring and restriction of material. Grantees who work directly to overcome these obstacles include Cuba On-Line and the Sabre Foundation. Several other grantees primarily working toward other Program results also engage in direct outreach efforts as part of their activities. A total of \$385,000 has been provided for activities in the Program area.

Grantee: Cuba On-Line

Funding: \$300,000

Activities: Cuba On-Line transmits information on democracy, human rights and free market economics directly to the Cuban people through the international mail and by electronic means.

Grantee: Sabre Foundation

Funding: \$85,000

Activities: The Sabre Foundation donates new books and other informational materials to independent groups and individuals in Cuba to benefit the Cuban people. Subject matter includes market economics and business, political science, government and law, medicine, and nursing and closely allied health care sciences.

The U.S. Institutional Context

USAID

USAID's 72 regional and country-level democracy programs are funded through five sources: 1) the Development Assistance Fund, 2) Support for East European Democracy, 3) Freedom Support Act, 4) the International Disaster Account, and 5) the Economic Support Fund (ESF) that is appropriated to the Department of State. The Cuba Program is funded through Economic Support Fund, which is designed to "support the economic and political foreign policy interests of the U.S. by providing financial assistance to allies and countries in transition to democracy." USAID and the State Department share responsibility for the use of ESF.

While the provision of ESF to USAID for the purpose of democracy promotion is common, the Cuba Program is *sui generis* within USAID. Due to its particular constraints, the Cuba Program is not included within the democracy and governance portfolio of the Latin America and Caribbean Bureau. Also, unlike many other democracy programs at USAID, it is advised by an Inter-agency Working Group (IWG) described in Section 2.5.3.

Department of State

The U.S. Department of State plays a major role in the implementation of USAID's Cuba Program through its Office of Cuban Affairs in Washington and the U.S. Interests Section in Havana.

- ▶ **Office of Cuban Affairs.** The Office of Cuban Affairs is located within the State

Department's Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs and serves as the USAID Cuba Program's principal liaison within the State Department. It co-chairs the Inter-Agency Working Group (IWG) on Cuba and provides policy guidance as well as Cuba-specific political and economic briefings to Program grantees as requested by USAID.

- ▶ **U.S. Interests Section.** The U.S. Interests Section in Havana supports USAID's Cuba Program by providing information on the situation in Cuba, assisting in the review of Program proposals, and evaluating the Program's effectiveness in Cuba.

Inter-agency Working Group

While USAID directly administers and manages the Program, decisions to make grant awards are cleared by various executive branch entities through an Inter-agency Working Group (IWG). The IWG is co-chaired by USAID's Senior Advisor/Coordinator for Cuba and the Director for the Office of Cuba Affairs at the Department of State. The IWG also includes representatives of the National Security Council, Department of Commerce (Office of Foreign Policy Control), Department of Treasury (Office of Foreign Assets Control), as well as representatives from various bureaus of the Department of State.

The role of the IWG is to provide initial screening and policy clearance for unsolicited grant proposals, after receipt of the views of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana. The IWG may also provide suggestions for improving grant proposals that it considers to have high potential.

The overall review process is as follows:

- ▶ An applicant submits a proposal which is previewed by USAID's Senior Advisor for Cuba who then decides whether or not it is suitable for further review in terms of compliance with *Section 109* of the *Helms-Burton Act* and with overall USAID program guidelines, and in terms of substantive detail.
- ▶ If so, the proposal is distributed to the IWG and also shared with the U.S. Interests Section in Havana.
- ▶ The IWG meets to review the proposal and either: 1) provides policy clearance for further USAID technical review; or, 2) requests further information and clarification; or, 3) rejects the proposal.
- ▶ If the IWG provides policy clearance, the USAID Senior Advisor/Coordinator for Cuba chairs a series of USAID internal technical reviews which include experts from USAID's Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, Global Bureau, and Office of the General Counsel. The technical review committee examines issues related to the feasibility, potential impact, and cost of the proposed project. The process may involve protracted dialogue with the applicant in order to resolve the issues.
- ▶ If the USAID technical committee reaches a positive decision concerning the proposal, the USAID Senior Advisor/Coordinator for Cuba drafts an approval memorandum for signature by the USAID Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean. The memorandum summarizes the review process, indicates how issues were resolved, and recommends approval to engage in final negotiations leading to a grant award, pending formal notification to Congress.
- ▶ The USAID Senior Advisor/Coordinator for Cuba drafts and the USAID Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs submits a formal notification to Congress, which is first cleared by the Department of State. The Chair and Ranking Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the House International Relations Committee, the Senate and House Appropriation Committees then have two weeks during which they may place a hold on the proposed award. If a hold is placed, USAID provides whatever information or

clarification is requested in order to lift the hold.

- ▶ In the absence of a hold, or once a hold is lifted, the USAID Office of Procurement proceeds with final negotiation of the grant award. The grant is approved only when the USAID Office of Procurement signs the grant agreement. The Office of Procurement conducts an additional review and may choose to conduct a "pre-award survey" prior to actual award.⁷
- ▶ Once approved, the USAID Senior Advisor/Coordinator for Cuba monitors grant implementation, and shares progress reports and implementation problems with the USAID Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean, the State Department, Congress, and other stakeholders.

In the future, USAID plans to supplement the review of unsolicited proposals with a formal solicitation of proposals. Over the past several months, USAID has drafted and cleared through the IWG and USAID technical committee a formal Request for Application (RFA) which the USAID Office of Procurement will issue upon approval by the USAID Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean. When issued, the RFA will give applicants 90 days to submit proposals. The USAID technical review committee will then rank the proposals according to criteria set forth in the RFA. The USAID Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean will then decide how many of the proposals, beginning with the top-ranked, will be funded. Each award will first be notified to Congress according to the normal process, and prior State Department clearance will be required for the congressional notification. Grants made under the RFA will still be subject to Office of Procurement pre-award audits and other standard procedures. However, the RFA process is intended to substantially expedite the review and approval process for grant applicants.

The United States Congress

The USAID Cuba Program operates with a degree of Congressional involvement unusual for most USAID democracy programs. Conflicting points of view about Cuba policy and about the Program itself within Congress complicate the decision-making environment, slow decision-making, and, at times, delay implementation of Program activities.

Congress has been quite directive concerning relations with Cuba through the enactment of the enabling legislation for the Cuba Program (the *Cuban Democracy Act of 1992* and the *Helms-Burton Act*). This legislation notwithstanding, there remains room for interpretation of the law and from this arises distinct disagreements between the Administration and Congress, and among Members of Congress, as to how to structure and implement the Cuba Program.

These arguments affect the operation of the Program by raising the number of effective stakeholders in the Program who must be taken into account—many of whom directly disagree with each other about Program details. Members of Congress, often acting through their staffs, exercise both direct and indirect influence upon the Program. For example:

- ▶ Members of Congress and staff members have advised potential grantees on the Program, have suggested that they apply for Program funds, and have written USAID in support of specific grant applications.
- ▶ Some grantees maintain active contact with Congress, and in particular with Members of Congress and their staffs supportive of the Cuba Program.
- ▶ USAID grants are subject to informational holds by Congressional Committee Chairpersons and Ranking Committee Members or their staffs acting on their behalf. Several grants have been held for periods ranging from a few weeks to almost one year.
- ▶ Finally, one grantee noted that Members of Congress have generated unwanted publicity

regarding their grant that created difficulties during the implementation of activities.

Despite the strong interest of several Members of Congress and their staffs in the Program as well as that of a number of other stakeholders, the evaluation team is not aware of any instance in which USAID's grant award process has been influenced unduly.

The Cuban Institutional Context

The Government of Cuba

Cuba's government prohibits the free, competitive elections that are essential to democracy. The Government of Cuba employs repression to limit civil society-including independent political parties and labor unions-restricts dissidence, and restrains the free flow of information.

The Cuban government uses various instruments of repression to maintain its current politico-economic system and to retain power. Virtually all those interviewed by the team agreed that the national security apparatus (including the *Direccion General de Inteligencia*-DGI, Ministry of Interior police, and customs service) is highly effective in its administration of repression within Cuba. In 1999, the Cuban Congress enacted *Law Number 88* that instituted prison sentences up to 20 years for Cuban citizens convicted of cooperating with the USAID Cuba Program.⁸

The Cuban government has by most accounts substantially restricted the free flow of information within, to, and from Cuba:

- ▶ **Monitoring of telephones.** Government monitoring of both international and domestic communications restricts the ability of Cubans to communicate freely by telephone, facsimile machine, or modem.
- ▶ **Restricted Internet Access.** The Cuban government tightly controls Internet access. Since the Cuban government opened a single Internet gateway in 1997, Internet access has remained severely restricted; only 33,000 Cubans (fewer than one-third of one percent of the population) are officially permitted access.⁹
- ▶ **Restricted Access and Confiscation of Communication Devices.** High costs, access restrictions, and aggressive confiscation at the border and within Cuba make it difficult for Cubans outside the regime to acquire and use satellite dishes, radio antennas, fax machines, photocopiers, portable and hand-held computers, video cameras, recorders and players, printers, cellular phones, and other portable communication devices.¹⁰
- ▶ **Confiscation of Informational Materials.** The Cuban customs service monitors mail, freight shipments, and the baggage of international visitors for material with political content that might be considered critical of the regime or supportive of democracy.
- ▶ **State-sponsored Intimidation, Harassment, and Arrest.** Finally, Neighborhood Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs) monitor their neighbors' activities and lead efforts to intimidate those perceived to be dissidents. Cuban state security monitors, harasses, and arrests those identified as providing information counter to the interests of the Government of Cuba.

Needless to say, the operational environment in Cuba affects the implementation of the USAID Cuba Program by limiting the means by which information on democracy can be transmitted to, from, and within the island. It is these restrictions on information flows that much of the Cuba Program is meant to address.

² USAID *Fiscal Year 2001 Annual Performance Plan*, page 58.

³ USAID, *USAID Cuba Program Assistance Strategy, FY00-FY05*. Washington, DC: USAID, September 1999; p. 4.

⁴ A strategic objective is "the most ambitious result (intended measurable change) in a particular program area that a USAID operational unit, along with its partners, can materially affect and for which it is willing to be held responsible."

⁵ USAID defines an intermediate result as "a key result which must occur in order to achieve a strategic objective. Like a strategic objective, it reflects a reason a program was undertaken. The difference between the two levels is simply that one must achieve the intermediate results before one can achieve the higher level strategic objective."

⁶ The assignment of Cuba Program partners to intermediate program results areas for this discussion corresponds to that laid out in the USAID Cuba Program Assistance Strategy, pp. 28-35. The Program's partners often identify themselves as working in multiple Program areas.

⁷ Pre-award surveys are defined in USAID's Automated Directives System at: <http://www.usaid.gov/pubs/ads/300/303.htm>

⁸ Republic of Cuba, *Ley de Proteccion de la Independencia Nacional y la Economia de Cuba*, No. 88, 1999.

⁹ There are several ways for Cubans to access e-mail and some other limited Internet capabilities through non-official channels that are also monitored by the state security apparatus. Even foreign tourists face difficulties in accessing the Internet; only five of Cuba's hotels make Internet access available. However, it is possible to access international Internet Service Providers by dialing long-distance numbers from a tourist hotel with international direct-dial service. However, these transmissions are prohibitively expensive for most Cubans and are also probably monitored.

¹⁰ One Program grantee reported that it is relatively easy to purchase some communication equipment (i.e. fax machines) in hard-currency stores within Cuba. Another grantee believed that it was necessary to provide documentation with regard to the use and intended location of the equipment, thereby exposing it to potential confiscation. The team was unable to determine the actual availability of communications equipment within Cuba or the current level of activity of the Government of Cuba in confiscating these items.



The United States Agency for International Development

Program Effectiveness and Compliance

General Observations | Operational Constraints of the Cuba Program
Program Effectiveness by Intermediate Result | Effectiveness of Program Administration
Overall Effectiveness and Compliance of Grantees

Program Effectiveness and Compliance

General Observations

USAID must attempt to please diverse constituencies, some of which view the Program in almost completely opposite ways. This is an extraordinarily difficult challenge. Almost any aspect of or decision about the USAID Cuba Program is likely to be attacked or criticized from one side or another or by one group or another. The lack of agreement on the basics of the Program makes it doubly hard to agree on what constitutes Program effectiveness (see Section 3.3). Major areas of contention follow below:

- ▶ **Program Purpose.** The purpose of the Program is the subject of sharply divergent views that emerged at its inception and continue today. Some argue that the Program should promote gradual and peaceful change in Cuba by expanding civil society's diversity, capacity, and ability to make demands on the regime, position the country for a "soft landing" at the time of government transition, and eventually take part in that transition. In sharp contrast, others contend that the Program should pursue an aggressive public relations strategy and engage in activities abroad and in Cuba to force the Government of Cuba to change its repressive practices.
- ▶ **Approach to Cuba.** Those who disagree with a more aggressive approach on Cuba policy tend to view the Program as too provocative. Those supporting a more confrontational approach portray the Program as far too timid, lacking in imagination, and marked by foot dragging intended to subvert the purpose of the Program.
- ▶ **Focus of Activities.** The disagreement about the types of grants and cooperative agreements funded by the Program range across four main (at least partly mutually exclusive) preferences: (1) that grants should be more diverse than at present, promoting more people-to-people contact, more studies of Cuban society and politics, and more engagement with government-sponsored and government-operated NGOs; (2) that grants and agreements should focus more on thoughtful, coordinated transition planning and political risk analysis for Cuba; (3) that grantees' efforts should concentrate more on Cuba's dissidents, human rights activists, and fully independent civil society; and (4) that the Program should include a major public diplomacy thrust to engender political change in Cuba through external and internal pressure.
- ▶ **Nature of Program Grantees.** There exists considerable disagreement over the nature and breadth of Cuba Program implementing partners. One oft-expressed opinion is that Cuban-American and explicitly anti-Castro groups should predominate among the Program's grantees because of their intensity, commitment, contacts, and knowledge of Cuba. Others hoping to ease bilateral tensions or promote specific areas of expertise or cooperation, advocate an even greater broadening of the range of Program grantees to include additional broadly focused democracy-promotion groups, public policy

organizations, universities, and associations not specifically focused on Cuba.

- ▶ **Number and Size of Grants.** Some observers and stakeholders argue that the average size of Cuba Program grants should increase and the total number of partner groups should be reduced to concentrate resources and increase the effectiveness of the groups whom they view as most successful. Others contend that the Program should increase the number of grantees and reduce average grant size in order to encourage diversity and innovation within the Program.
- ▶ **Funding for Cuban Partners.** Some critics of the Program complain that the policy against cash assistance to Cuban groups or individuals interprets the law excessively narrowly so as to hamper necessary assistance to dissidents in Cuba. They refer to the following provision of the *Helms-Burton Act* to support their contention that sub-grants and cash assistance to dissidents and independent NGOs in Cuba could be provided:

Notwithstanding any other provision of the law...the President is authorized to furnish assistance and provide other support for individuals and independent nongovernmental organizations to support democracy building efforts for Cuba.¹¹

Further, they argue, it is not unusual for USAID to provide cash assistance to individuals and organizations cooperating with its programs in other countries. Other stakeholders and senior USAID personnel have contended that the Agency should maintain its current policy of not permitting partners to directly transfer USAID funds to independent groups or individuals in Cuba. They argue that any change in policy might decrease USAID's already limited ability to account for assistance provided on the island itself, might further jeopardize Cuban partners, and might attract Program clients more interested in obtaining funding than promoting democracy in Cuba.

Operational Constraints of the Cuba Program

The section above summarizes the difficulties arising when evaluating the Program given the politics and lack of consensus. But even if all stakeholders could agree on basic goals, it is clear that it is difficult to operate any type of program in the current environment in Cuba. In addition, legal and institutional constraints limit the Program to operating within a smaller space and with a more limited number of tools than other USAID democracy and governance programs:

- ▶ **U.S. Law.** The *Helms-Burton Act* bars assistance to the Cuban state or its dependencies. U.S. law also restrains promoting change by other than peaceful means and bars broader economic engagement with Cuba. Because the regime is highly centralized and penetrates most of the society, there remains little institutional, economic, or organizational space that is not part of or dependent upon the Government of Cuba. This restriction is operationally interpreted to include all but Cuba's most clearly independent institutions, NGOs, and individuals.
- ▶ **Partners in Cuba.** The legislation on which the Cuba Program rests heavily emphasizes independent civil society. However, Cuban independent civil society organizations appear divided, weak, and repressed. There is disagreement among analysts studying various aspects of the development of civil society organizations-including their actual number, membership, resources, and ability to confront the regime. Expert observers agree that the political space allowed for NGOs waxes and wanes. Most of those interviewed suggest that independent civil society organizations and even government-sponsored NGOs with a somewhat reformist bent are substantially weaker and more repressed than they were in the mid-1990s.
- ▶ **USAID Restrictions on Sub-granting and Cash Assistance.** The Cuba Program policy adopted by USAID prohibits sub-granting or sending even small amounts of USAID funding to independent Cuban civil society organizations, dissidents and their families, or other individuals on the island.

- ▶ **Cuban Law.** Finally, as noted, Cuban law specifically criminalizes Cubans' cooperation with USAID.

The environment within Cuba obviously impedes the implementation of the Program to varying degrees depending upon the type of grantee activity.

- ▶ **Day-to-day Work with Independent Cubans.** Most difficult is direct cooperation on the island with or assistance to Cuba's human rights activists, political dissidents, and independent journalists, independent cooperatives, independent NGOs, and other individuals and groups not dependent upon the regime. By criminalizing cooperation with the Program and by other repression and information restrictions, the Government of Cuba forces Program grantees to use costly, discreet means and raises the risks for the grantees' Cuban interlocutors.
- ▶ **Delivery of information, materials, and equipment to Cuba.** Somewhat less difficult is the provision of informational materials and equipment to the island. Cuban information controls and repression considerably elevate delivery costs for materials and assistance, and restrict the flow of information into and out of the island. Possession of these materials is also illegal under Cuban law, the application of which is arbitrary and capricious. However, some of the information, materials, and equipment intended for distribution on the island do make it into hands of Cubans who then continue the process of information dissemination.
- ▶ **Transition Planning and Work in the U.S. or Third Countries.** The least difficult of activities to implement are those that involve transition planning research or promoting international awareness and criticism of Cuba's labor or human rights policies. While these activities face some barriers such as the lack of reliable information or access to Cuban officials and other informed sources, they can be conducted with limited active opposition by the Government of Cuba. Although it is easier to work outside of Cuba, there are still some serious difficulties. It has been reported that some of the Program's grantees' offices in the U.S. have been broken into and vandalized, and that some grantee personnel have received death threats from individuals assumed to be working on behalf of the Government of Cuba.

Program Effectiveness by Intermediate Result

The evaluation team reviewed activities under each of the six Intermediate Results relating to the USAID Cuba Program Strategic Objective to "increase the free flow of accurate information on democracy, human rights, and free enterprise to, from, and within Cuba." Despite the aforementioned constraints imposed by the nature of the Program itself, and despite the evaluation team's inability to gather important information from within Cuba or from U.S. Government classified materials, the evaluation team was able to collect substantial information related to the strengths and weaknesses of the Program during its interviews and review of grantee files at USAID. Work toward each programmatic result is examined below.

Building Solidarity with Cuba's Human Rights Activists

Grantees working directly to build solidarity with human rights activists in the United States, Cuba, and in third countries include the Center for a Free Cuba, the Cuban Dissidence Task Group, Freedom House, the Institute for Democracy in Cuba, and the International Republican Institute. As noted in Section 2.4, \$3.65 million, more than one half of total Program funding, has supported activities in this area.

USAID gauges its progress in building human rights solidarity by tracking the number of human rights organizations operating in Cuba that are providing information to the Cuban people. The Agency relies upon estimates of the numbers of these groups provided by the Dutch NGO, *Pax Christi*. The *Pax Christi* estimates build upon a baseline developed by the Cuban Christian

Democratic Party that established the number of "dissident" groups in Cuba. In 1999, an estimated 380 groups were providing information to the Cuban people. USAID anticipated an increase of 5% to 400 active groups by the close of Fiscal Year 2000 and as many as 500 groups in FY 2001.¹²

Findings

- ▶ **Program Result Indicator.** The team questions the Program's reliance upon an increase in the number of NGOs in Cuba as a measure of effectiveness. It is possible, for instance, that a decrease in the number of groups might actually be a positive development as it could represent a uniting of human rights activists in larger, more effective organizations. In addition, commonly cited estimates of the number of independent NGOs in Cuba appear questionable in that they may fail to subtract from the estimated totals those groups that become defunct or inactive. The estimates also may fail to account for fragmentation and overlapping membership among NGOs. In addition, the Government of Cuba appears to tolerate at least some dissidence and independent NGOs for international public relations purposes and to permit the security apparatus to keep tabs on regime critics. The Government of Cuba may have even encouraged the formation of some of the groups that are believed to be independent and are included in Program estimates.
- ▶ **Grantee Activity Indicators.** In addition to the Agency's result-level performance indicator, the grantees working in this area use, at least informally, several activity-level indicators to measure their progress. Several of these grantee indicators in this and other sections should prove useful to USAID in developing new Program-level result indicators. Examples provided to the team in grantee interviews include:
 - ▶ Participation of respected third-country leaders and human rights organizations in promoting human rights solidarity
 - ▶ Linkages developed between third-country organizations and independent civil society in Cuba
 - ▶ Organization and cooperation among human rights activists and organizations within Cuba
 - ▶ Ownership of Program activities by human rights activists within Cuba
 - ▶ Ability of Cuban human rights activists to remain in Cuba
 - ▶ Willingness of Cuban human rights activists to remain in Cuba
 - ▶ Distribution and appropriateness of informational materials, food, medicine, and equipment
 - ▶ International acceptance of grantee and Cuban partner work products, analysis, and information
 - ▶ Reaction of the Government of Cuba and state institutions to Program activities
 - ▶ Use of information developed under the Program by the U.S. and International media and in official decision-making
 - ▶ Sustainability of efforts through the leveraging of non-USAID funding
 - ▶ State of human rights activism based on Eastern European transition models
- ▶ **Moral and Material Support.** Various sources suggested that the provision of moral support and modest material aid to prisoners of conscience, outlets for dissident writings, and information to Cubans does produce some of the intended effect. That is, independent NGOs, dissidents, and human rights activists in Cuba are reportedly encouraged and protected by the attention of USAID partner groups, and Cuba's human rights record receives increased inter-governmental scrutiny. Some Program grantees have collected direct evidence of this sentiment among leading dissidents on the island. On several occasions, USAID and U.S. Interests Section personnel have been able to confirm that at least some of the items sent to Cuba are arriving at the intended destination.
- ▶ **Efficiency of Material Support.** The Government of Cuba contends that all organizations "outside of the Revolution" are illusory, insignificant, or manufactured by forces outside of Cuba. Opponents of the regime and their families suffer loss of employment, continual

harassment, and imprisonment in inhumane conditions. Human rights activists are considered enemies of the state and have few resources to effect change. The USAID Cuba Program policy prohibiting sub-granting or providing cash in local or hard currency to Cuban citizens or independent organizations limits the ability of grantees to provide necessary material support for human rights activists and their activities on the island. While it may be possible for these activists to purchase many of the materials they need to conduct their activities, thereby cutting down on confiscation of materials and equipment at the border, USAID policy serves as an impediment and appears to be contributing to an unnecessary inefficiency within the Program.

- ▶ **Potential for Exporting Internal Opposition from Cuba.** Some observers contend that because active dissidents in Cuba are relatively few, mutually isolated, and subject to repression, they tend to become discouraged and exhausted. The USAID Cuba Program clearly seeks to provide encouragement and solidarity to Cuba's dissidents, and to give some of them very modest assistance to help them carry on, and to encourage others to join them. It is possible that this support may have the unintended consequence of hastening departure of dissidents from the island. The Castro regime has established a pattern of allowing dissidents to self identify, and then allowing them or encouraging them to emigrate after a period of observation and harassment.

- ▶ **International Awareness.** Recent United Nations Human Rights Commission criticism of Cuba's human rights performance came about in part because nations previously supportive of Cuba withdrew that support. Several USAID Cuba Program partner organizations have effectively built awareness of Cuban human rights problems in both these countries and around the world. They have provided information to senior policy makers in several countries who have become increasingly engaged with regard to the state of human rights in Cuba today. In addition, linkages between Cuban activists and third-country organizations have been strengthened during Program implementation.

Planning for Transition

Transition planning accounts for the second largest share of Program funding, totaling \$802,000. The grantees that have conducted transition analysis include the International Foundation for Election Systems, Rutgers University, and the U.S.-Cuba Business Council. USAID measures results in the transition planning area by tracking the cumulative number of transition plans that are communicated to the Cuban people in hard copy, by radio, and other means as reported by Program grantees working in this and other areas. In Fiscal Year 1999, one transition plan had been communicated to the Cuban people. USAID planned to have two additional plans transmitted by the close of FY 2000 and as many as five transmitted by FY 2001.

Findings

- ▶ **Program Result Indicator.** USAID is not measuring an actual result by tracking the number of plans communicated to Cuba. The evaluation team realizes the difficulty in measuring the impact of planning until the time an actual transition is underway in Cuba. Perhaps new measures could aggregate some of the grantee activity indicators listed below through an index or other means.

- ▶ **Grantee Activity Indicators.** Grantees active in this area provided the following examples of activity-level performance indicators:
 - ▶ Evidence of sound empirical research in transition plans produced by grantee staff and consultants
 - ▶ Evidence of sound technical recommendations related to transition in Cuba
 - ▶ Understanding of the current situation in Cuba and history of Cuba as evidenced in transition plans
 - ▶ Evidence of input by the Government of Cuba and/or independent Cuban actors into transition plans

- ▶ Provision of equipment to independent Cuban actors cooperating in transition planning
 - ▶ Demonstration of the applicability of lessons learned and parallels in Cuba to regime change in other countries
 - ▶ Evidence of consideration of transition planning efforts with past and present efforts funded by USAID and other donors
 - ▶ Publication of transition plans in the United States and third countries
 - ▶ Distribution of transition plans within Cuba
 - ▶ Reaction of the Government of Cuba to transition plans
 - ▶ Reaction of future leaders of a peaceful transition in Cuba
 - ▶ Reaction of democracy-minded people in Cuba
 - ▶ Reaction of bilateral and multi-lateral organizations that might play of role in a peaceful, democratic transition in Cuba
 - ▶ Reaction of the international media to transition plans
 - ▶ Eventual use of transition plans during a peaceful change of regime in Cuba
- ▶ **Raising Awareness of the Need for Planning.** USAID and its grantees have raised awareness within the U.S. Government and the international donor community of the importance of advance planning for an eventual transition in Cuba.
- ▶ **Research Agenda.** The Program lacks an explicit research agenda. Transition studies do not appear to be coordinated among Partners to maximize their utility, impact, and contribution to overall Program goals. Several grantees appeared to be unaware of the research that had been conducted by other grantees and think tanks not associated with the Program or to have specific knowledge of USAID's Cuba Program research agenda and how that might be driving current and future programming.
- ▶ **Delayed Distribution of Work Products.** Some of the materials funded in this area appear to have not been distributed outside of Cuba Program grantees, and in some cases U.S. Government circles, until several months after their publication. This delay has deprived grantees working in other Program areas as well as other actors of information that might have increased the appropriateness and effectiveness of their activities.
- ▶ **Informational Materials Provided to Cuba.** As noted elsewhere in this report, those products intended for people on the island do not appear to have been market tested to gauge the appropriateness, relevance, and potential impact of the message and delivery vehicle.

Giving Voice to Cuba's Independent Journalists

Support for independent journalism totals \$670,000. Grantees working directly in the area of journalism include CubaNet, Cuba Free Press, and Florida International University's International Media Center. USAID has measured Program progress in this area by tracking the number of original-content stories published via the Internet by CubaNet and Cuba Free Press. With the addition of Florida International University, a grantee focusing on the training of independent journalists, USAID has also begun to consider the quality of those published articles as a measure of performance. In Fiscal Year 1999, 3,000 articles were published via the Internet. USAID planned an increase to 4,000 in FY 2000 and 5,000 in FY 2001.

Findings

- ▶ **Program Result Indicator.** USAID is currently measuring sheer numbers of articles published by two of its grantees but is transitioning to include a more qualitative measure.
- ▶ **Grantee Activity Indicators.** The grantees carrying out activities in this area report the use of the following measures of success:

- ▶ Awareness of the activities of independent civil society and journalists within Cuba
 - ▶ Direct contact between U.S. and third-country nationals with representatives of independent civil society and journalists within Cuba
 - ▶ Distribution of information processing and communication equipment into Cuba
 - ▶ Number of subscribers to grantee e-mail newsletter
 - ▶ Number of visits to grantee web site
 - ▶ Number of downloads from grantee web sites
 - ▶ Number of visits to grantee web site from unique Internet Uniform Resource Locators
 - ▶ Material distributed to international dailies
 - ▶ Perception of neutrality and professionalism of reporting by independent journalists
 - ▶ Reaction of the Government of Cuba to grantee and grantee Cuban partner activities
 - ▶ Recognition by major media outlets and multi-lateral organizations of grantee and grantee Cuban partners as credible sources of information
 - ▶ Reaction of recent arrivals from Cuba to the Spanish-language content published by the grantees
 - ▶ Publicity and awareness generated surrounding partners on the island rather than the grantee itself
 - ▶ Sustainability of independent civil society within Cuba
- ▶ **Moral Support.** Due to the repression they suffer and the focus of their activity, independent journalists within Cuba can be considered to be a sub-set of human rights activists. Although communication with independent journalists is often difficult and uncertain, the Program appears to have provided important moral support to these individuals.
 - ▶ **Use of the Internet to reach Audiences outside of Cuba.** Program grantees are effectively using the Internet to reach those interested in Cuba outside of Cuba. However, the restrictions imposed by the Government of Cuba on access to the World Wide Web, e-mail, and other Internet resources appear to prevent most information from being delivered electronically to Cuba.
 - ▶ **Quality of Work Product.** There are very few professionally trained independent journalists in Cuba today. As a result of this limited training, repression, and the constant flow of disinformation from the Government of Cuba, extensive assistance to these individuals will be required before their work products are widely credible. One relatively recent Program grantee, Florida International University, is working to address this problem by developing a cadre of emerging journalists through correspondence-course techniques and other means of distance learning.

Defending the Rights of Cuban Workers

USAID has provided \$393,575 to advance Cuban workers' rights, encourage independent unions, and promote international better business practices by foreign firms investing in Cuba. The two grantees working in this area are the American Center for International Labor Solidarity and the National Policy Association. USAID follows the progress of its grantees working to defend the rights of Cuban workers by tracking the number of international advocacy efforts related to labor rights in Cuba. The State Department also provides USAID with the number of official *demarches* issued by the American Regional Organization (ORIT) of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. In 1999, no *demarches* had been issued. USAID planned for two *demarches* to be issued by the close of FY 2000 and for four to be issued in FY 2001.

Findings

- ▶ **Program Result Indicator.** The evaluation team believes that the performance indicator related to the issuance of *demarches* is too high level and is outside of the Agency's manageable interest. It seems unlikely that the Agency and its grantees could substantially influence the actions of the ICFTU through the small amount of activity in this one Program

area.

- ▶ **Grantee Activity Indicators.** Grantees working to defend labor rights in Cuba report using the following activity-level indicators:
 - ▶ Quality of analysis and diagnostic studies produced on the state of labor rights and trade unions in Cuba
 - ▶ International awareness of repressive labor practices in Cuba
 - ▶ International condemnation of repressive labor practices in Cuba
 - ▶ Engagement of union centrals and multi-laterals on the issue of Cuban labor rights
 - ▶ Confrontation of Cuban labor officials in international labor forums with evidence of repressive labor practices in Cuba
 - ▶ Unified stances taken by and solidarity of international labor activists and officials with regard to repressive labor practices in Cuba
 - ▶ Engagement of individual U.S. and third-country labor unions with regard to repressive labor practices in Cuba
 - ▶ Identification of partners within independent labor sector in Cuba
 - ▶ Delivery of material aid to the independent labor sector in Cuba
 - ▶ Visits to the United States and third countries by representatives of the Cuban independent labor sector in Cuba
 - ▶ Formation of international coalitions to examine business practices in Cuba in the joint venture sector
 - ▶ Awareness and advocacy of internationally recognized practices such as the Arcos Principles and OECD agreements
 - ▶ Changes in Cuban laws and regulations to reflect internationally recognized principles of labor rights

- ▶ **Involvement of a Leading Labor Organization.** The AFL-CIO has a demonstrated ability to raise international awareness of worker rights in countries around the world. The AFL-CIO's willingness to bring its operational knowledge to bear through its affiliate, ACILS, represents an important asset of the Cuba Program.

- ▶ **Absence of a Partner within Cuba.** The Communist party-affiliated Cuban Workers Confederation (CTC) continues to dominate Cuba's organized labor and supports regime policies and practices harmful to workers' rights and in direct contravention to international labor treaties. While it is possible to raise international awareness of the labor situation within Cuba, the absence of an on-island partner hampers work in this area.

- ▶ **Development of International Awareness of Repressive Cuban Labor Practices.** The Program has supported the formation of an international working group to examine the joint venture sector in Cuba and to advocate for the application of internationally accepted labor practices.

Helping Develop Independent Cuban NGOs

USAID has provided a total of \$408,700 to the Pan American Development Foundation and Partners of the Americas to assist them in their efforts to help develop independent NGOs in Cuba. USAID measures Program progress by tracking the number of Cuban NGOs that are independent of the Government of Cuba with respect to membership, direction, policies, and financing, as assessed by the U.S. State Department. Cuban dissident and other human rights organizations are not included in this measure. USAID is in the process of determining baselines and targets for this indicator.

Findings

- ▶ **Program Result Indicator.** As with USAID's approach to measuring success in the Intermediate Result area of solidarity with Cuba's human rights activists, the team believes that more comprehensive, qualitative measures could be adopted to measure work in this

area.

- ▶ **Grantee Activity Indicators.** Grantees active in this area report using the following informal measures of success:
 - ▶ Information collected by grantee personnel with regard to the state of independent civil society in Cuba
 - ▶ Cooperation from partners in Cuba
 - ▶ Cooperation from the Government of Cuba
 - ▶ Ability to leverage USAID funding as seed funding for other grantee activities
 - ▶ Number of exchange visits between Cuba and the United States or third countries

- ▶ **Capacity Building of U.S. NGOs.** Some capacity building appears to have taken place within the two grantee organizations in the United States as they implement their activities, build, and work with contacts in the international community, and to a more limited extent, in Cuba.

- ▶ **Government of Cuba.** Work in this area has been hampered by an initial optimism on the part of USAID that the Government of Cuba might not work effectively to thwart assistance to truly independent NGOs. As activities unfolded, the Government of Cuba blocked much of the planned cooperation between the independent sector and grantees working in this area.

Providing Direct Outreach to the Cuban People

USAID has provided a total of \$385,000 to Cuba On-Line and Sabre Foundation for direct outreach activities. USAID measures Program-level results in this area by tracking the percentage of Cuban citizens who have received information through foreign newspapers and books as measured by USAID-funded purposive sample research of recent arrivals from Cuba conducted by the University of Florida. An additional \$110,000 in Program funding was provided to the University of Florida for the purpose of the survey. In FY 1999, the survey findings stated that 40% of recent emigrants from Cuba had received information from foreign newspapers or books. The target for FY 2000 was 45% and increases in 5% increments each subsequent year until FY 2003 when it reaches 60%.

Findings

Program Result Indicator. The University of Florida survey of recently arrived Cuban immigrants was conducted from December 1998 through April 1999. 1023 interviews were conducted among a sample of recent arrivals located through the Immigration and Naturalization Service as they entered the U.S. at Miami international airport, and through charitable relief agencies.

Several factors complicated this survey and call for caution in the use of information gathered through the study. Recognizing that such a sample could not represent the Cuban population, the questionnaire attempted to decrease the survey's margin of error by asking respondents to speculate about the opinions of other Cubans, including those who support the Castro regime, and by statistically weighting the samples to better approximate Cuba's population. The methodology employed failed to compensate for the survey's major problem: the extremely high selection bias of the emigre sample. Various distortions are evident in the resulting sample: Most notably, 87% of the interviewees were white and 13% black, vastly under representing blacks. Males and younger Cubans were over represented. Projective questions (asking respondents to guess about others' opinions) cannot compensate for such error.

The questionnaire also had shortcomings. The lack of anonymity of respondents would almost certainly reduce their candor and increase the likelihood of affirmative response bias (saying what the respondent believes the interviewer wants to hear). Many questions seemed worded to induce particular responses and discourage others. The answer arrays on some items forced falsely

dichotomous choices upon respondents. Other items were presented in a confusing manner. The write up of the data analysis suffered from tendentious presentation that calls into question the analysts' objectivity.

Further emigre surveys would likely suffer some of the same biases and inherent limitations. Some problems could be overcome with careful instrument design, but the enormous selection bias could only be corrected by surveying a probability sample of island Cubans—reportedly an impossibility in Cuba today. A more reasonable means of supplying information to Program grantees and USAID might be to conduct small focus group sessions among recent emigres on a regular basis, with discussions tailored to elicit information about the environment in Cuba and USAID Cuba Program and grantee operational concerns.

- ▶ **Grantee Activity Indicators.** The grantees working in this area measure their success through several activity-level measures:
 - ▶ Identification of a Cuban partner for on-island distribution of informational materials
 - ▶ Cost-sharing by a Cuban partner related to on-island distribution of informational materials
 - ▶ Requests by a Cuban partner for specific informational materials
 - ▶ Distribution of informational materials sent directly to the Cuban people
 - ▶ Quality and professionalism of reporting included in informational materials
 - ▶ Refutation of Government of Cuba propaganda and disinformation
 - ▶ Reaction of the Government of Cuba

- ▶ **Delivery of literature and other small items to Cuba.** While it has proven impossible to deliver large quantities of information to Cuba by container or other wholesale means, activities in this area are taking advantage of innovative channels for delivering literature to Cuba which appear to be both effective and efficient. Lack of a partner within Cuba is a particularly important obstacle in distribution of large quantities of informational materials within Cuba.

- ▶ **Informational Materials Provided to Cuba.** As noted elsewhere in this report, the products funded in this Program area do not appear to have been tested in focus groups with recent arrivals from Cuba or through a similar research methodology to test the appropriateness, relevance, and potential impact of the message and delivery vehicle.

Effectiveness of Program Administration

The evaluation team agrees with most commentators and stakeholders who consider the administration of the Cuba Program to be satisfactory and effective, particularly in recognition of the fact that it takes place in such a difficult political context and is subjected to constant cross-cutting pressures. Several of those interviewed stated that USAID and the USAID Cuba Program staff are in a difficult and unenviable position as they manage this complex program. The vast majority of the Program grantees made very positive comments about the support and day-to-day guidance received from USAID Cuba Program staff and USAID's Office of Procurement.

- ▶ **Administration with Limited Resources.** The IWG and USAID Cuba Program's administration do an appropriately careful, patient, and satisfactory job of vetting proposals and grantees/partners. This is no small accomplishment given the limited staffing of the Program and the potentially embarrassing consequences of possible missteps.

- ▶ **Monitoring of Grantee Reporting.** USAID monitoring of reporting appears effective. Tardy quarterly reports elicited prompt USAID notification of grantees urging compliance.

- ▶ **Oversight of Financial Reporting.** USAID's financial administration of the Program appears effective and satisfactory. One grantee for which compliance issues arose has been dropped from the Program.

- ▶ **Support of U.S. Interests Section.** Despite absence of personnel for this purpose, and despite major operational obstacles to monitoring grantee activities in Cuba, both USAID and Department of State staff at the U.S. Interest Section in Havana nevertheless conduct spot checks and monitor client feedback to grantees to evaluate Program impact and receipt of materials.

There are some aspects of Program administration that the evaluation team believes require attention by USAID Cuba Program staff.

- ▶ **Knowledge of Cuba throughout USAID.** USAID Cuba Program personnel interviewed by the team are knowledgeable with regard to Cuba despite limited direct exposure to the country. However, USAID's base of knowledge, as an agency, on Cuban affairs is growing slowly. Further, the Agency seems to have underutilized information resources generated by its own grantees. This problem partly stems from USAID's steep learning curve regarding Cuba, the Cuba Program's limited staffing, the relative newness of the Program, and the absence of a clearly articulated information development, analysis, and dissemination agenda.
- ▶ **Staffing.** The two full-time Cuba Program staff positions in Washington, D.C. are occupied by the Senior Advisor/Coordinator for Cuba and a junior officer. There continues to be no USAID personnel at the U.S. Interest Section in Havana, a situation that has existed since the start of the Program. Despite the relatively small amount of funding provided under the Cuba Program, the unusual nature of Program makes huge demands of USAID staff time. In light of the heavy workload related to administration, monitoring, and communication with a multiplicity of stakeholders, the Cuba Program is understaffed both at USAID headquarters and, especially, in Havana.
- ▶ **Evaluation Capacity.** USAID's ability to assess Cuba Program effectiveness is limited in several respects. Assessment capability becomes weaker the more the Program involves partner activity or clients within Cuba. This problem is inherent in the difficult operational environment-end-use monitoring of delivery and receipt of materials is very difficult because of the closed nature of Cuban society and necessarily discreet nature of some of Program activities. In addition, the Agency should expect a positive-response bias from end users as those asking the questions are those providing the assistance itself. Some grantees working with people on the island have been able to establish systems by which e-mails are sent and receipts delivered to confirm delivery of Program resources. USAID Cuba Program staff and staff members of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana have also worked to monitor end use and report uniformly positive results in so doing. However, the limits on time and attention to the Program at the Interests Section and the limited amount of time spent by USAID Cuba Program staff in Cuba make end-use monitoring sporadic.
- ▶ **Performance Measures.** USAID Cuba Program performance indicators require additional work before they will provide the information the Agency requires for effective management and communication of results to stakeholders. Baseline data and targets used to measure Program-level performance (percent of Cubans receiving "accurate information on democracy and human rights," estimated number of dissident groups, estimated number of independent NGOs, independent NGOs developed, and the "number of transition plans communicated to the Cuban People")¹³ are drawn from limited data sources. The performance measures appear to have limited utility for monitoring and evaluating the activities of some partners and clients operating under the strictures of Cuban repression.
- ▶ **Unstructured Grant Application Process.** The Program operates with a relatively unstructured grant application procedure governed by few explicit rules. The Agency does not currently solicit interest in the Program through a Request for Applications (RFA) or a Request for Proposal (RFP). The current procedure has caused slowdowns in the application process as several grantees went through protracted negotiations with USAID and the IWG to define acceptable Program activities.

- ▶ **Burdensome Grant Requirements for Smaller Grantees.** USAID rules and procedures for grantees and contractors impose high overhead costs for some of the smaller grantees which report having to dedicate much more energy and time than they expected to complex grant administration and reporting.¹⁴
- ▶ **Sustainability of Grantees.** The Program does not appear to emphasize the importance of eventual self-sustainability of grantees. Some grantees make their almost complete dependency upon continued Program funding explicit. Termination of USAID funding would end their activities and perhaps strand their clients in Cuba.
- ▶ **Ability of Grantees to Absorb Funding.** Some grants made by USAID appear to have been too large for some groups to absorb within a short duration, especially for those groups just beginning operations. Some grantees have had to seek extensions while they struggled to develop the capacity to implement their activities or gain greater understanding of the Cuban context.

Overall Effectiveness and Compliance of Grantees

In addition to the findings outlined above, the evaluation team identified several items related to overall Program effectiveness and grantee compliance that cut across a number of the six Program areas:

- ▶ **Reliance on Independent Civil Society in Cuba.** Given the small amount of support provided to date, some of the partners working with dissidents and NGO clients in Cuba have held inordinately optimistic estimates of their clients' prospects for evading the control of the Government of Cuba and for shaping events in a change-of-regime scenario. The Government of Cuba expends substantial resources to undermine independent forces in Cuba. Work in this area must take into account the active hostility of the Government of Cuba towards activity outside of the state or its dependencies as well as the apparent weakness of truly independent civil society in Cuba today. In addition, there appear to be few activities that focus on encouraging solidarity or coalition building among human rights activists within Cuba. To the extent that the democratic opposition is splintered, it is vulnerable to repression, penetration, and manipulation by Cuban government forces.
- ▶ **Difficulty Countering Cuban Propaganda on Civil Society.** The Government of Cuba contends that independent civil society within Cuba is either non-existent or manufactured by external forces. Grantees working with independent groups and individuals have worked to refute the impression created by the Government of Cuba. However, the team encountered several conflicting accounts by grantees and observers of the Cuban scene with regard to actual state of independent activity on the island. Disagreement on this important aspect of Cuban political life allows the Government of Cuba to more effectively pursue its line of argument with regard to the character of civil society in Cuba.
- ▶ **Reliance on Country Transition Parallels.** The team probed for possible country parallels to Cuba, and concluded that there are virtually none that are instructive in the case of Cuba today. Reasoning by analogy to Eastern Europe and particularly to Poland in the 1980s, something several observers and Program stakeholders seem prone to do in the Cuban case, is fraught with potential for error. While there might be some similarities, Cuba has nothing akin to the Solidarity labor movement; its Catholic Church appears institutionally weaker than was Poland's and much less willing to confront the regime. Finally, unlike the case of Poland, the regime has for decades exported many of its dissidents from the island nation. The team was persuaded, however, that some of the methods used by internal and external actors to encourage change within the Eastern Bloc in the 1980s and early 1990s are applicable in Cuba today. These approaches must be tailored to the Cuban case and reviewed for effectiveness during the implementation of future activities.
- ▶ **Informational Materials Provided to Cuba.** This Program is about information. Yet there

is little test marketing or rigorous message development (e.g. through focus groups with recent arrivals from Cuba) to gauge the appropriateness, relevance, and likely impact of grantee messages and delivery vehicles. Several grantees appear to sharpen their messages through their interactions with intellectuals, dissidents, journalists, and others from the island as well as through their review of the Cuban press. However, a more systematic approach would serve the Program well.

- ▶ **Distribution of Materials.** Some grantees have experienced operational problems in their attempts to deliver information, equipment, and materials to Cuba (e.g. a few cooperating individuals have been detained by Cuban authorities or had important materials and equipment confiscated). Overall, the Program's grantees seem to suffer from a weak, tenuous, and uncertain capacity to deliver materials into Cuba. There are notable successes among certain grantees but it remains much easier to get information (e.g., dissident journalists' writings) out of Cuba than it is to send and disseminate information within Cuba.
- ▶ **Parallel Funding for Materials.** As noted, some grantees receive non-USAID funding which they employ to promote activities other than those funded through their USAID grants or cooperative agreements. In some cases these materials (non-USAID funded) are sent into Cuba alongside USAID-funded materials, creating the appearance that they are one and the same and potentially suggesting U.S. Government endorsement of them. While many of these materials are appropriate, some may not be entirely compatible with the goals of the Program.
- ▶ **Capacity Building of Grantees.** Through its very implementation, the Cuba Program contributes to the capacity of its grantees working in the U.S. and in third countries and to a certain extent Program clients in Cuba.
- ▶ **Compliance with Grant Terms and Conditions.** With some exceptions, grantees of the Program appear to have adhered to the terms and conditions of their grants over the course of the Program. Program personnel with the Latin America and Caribbean Bureau and the Office of Procurement report minimal compliance problems among grantees as measured through pre-award and subsequent reviews. Further, the evaluation team's interviews and review of grantee files maintained by the Cuba Program indicate few compliance problems.
- ▶ **Organizational Overlap of Grantees.** There exist various interconnections among several Cuba Program grantees. Various partner organizations have significant overlaps or ties among them, sharing members of boards of directors, advisory boards, operating personnel, technical support subcontractors, consultants, and to some extent clients on the island. While this overlapping could be considered to be a source of strength and cohesion for the Program, it could also eventually lead to a stifling of innovation within the Program.
- ▶ **Cooperation Among Grantees.** Despite the sharing of some resources, there has existed openly expressed antagonism among certain Program grantees. There appear to be untapped synergies among those groups focused on Cuba and those with broader mandates. While competition for scarce resources is not unusual and reflects many of the political conflicts previously mentioned, this Program does involve advancing the foreign policy of the United States to promote freedom in Cuba. A culture of cooperation and information sharing among grantees would help all partners support the Program's goal.
- ▶ **Absorption of Funds.** Several grantees found themselves unable to absorb Program funds in the time allotted due to staffing levels, knowledge of Cuba, or operational difficulties.
- ▶ **Frustrated Activities.** A small number of grantees have been unable to finish their proposed projects, and have had to redefine their activities with the assistance and cooperation of USAID's Program administration, or in one case to abandon project activities

and return funds. Most problems have stemmed from the opposition to the activities by the Government of Cuba or an inability to find an appropriate partner in Cuba itself.

- ▶ **Dependency on USAID.** As noted above, some grantees openly express their dependency on the USAID Cuba Program for future funding and survival. This may not be problematic for certain types of grants or cooperative agreements (for instance, to deliver one-time training or provide narrowly circumscribed services or to conduct an explicitly defined research activity). However, for other activities such as encouraging on-island NGOs, dissidents, or human rights activists, self-sustainability seems important so as not to strand clients should the Program falter.

¹¹ *Helms-Burton Act, Section 109(a).*

¹² The U.S. Government's fiscal year runs from October 1 to September 30.

¹³ USAID Cuba Program Assistance Strategy, pp. 36-39.

¹⁴ USAID requirements are described on USAID's Web site:
<http://www.usaid.gov/pubs/ads/300/303.htm>



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Recommended Actions

There are a number of actions that USAID could take in order to improve efforts toward the Agency's goal of a peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba. Some actions require substantial additional Cuba Program and operating resources while others can be implemented at a limited cost.

- ▶ **Continue the Cuba Program.** The USAID Cuba Program and its grantees have demonstrated the potential to contribute to a peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba. While the Program is only a small part of the U.S. Government's approach to Cuba, USAID's encouragement of democratic change in Cuba provides sustenance and information to important actors on the island, within the international community, and to several U.S. civil society organizations that are helping people within Cuba today.
- ▶ **Assign a USAID Cuba Program full-time employee to the U.S. Interests Section in Havana.** The Cuba Program would benefit from the sustained presence of a USAID officer in Havana. Monitoring and evaluation of Program activities taking place within Cuba itself have been sporadic to date. Coordination of activities within Cuba has also been extremely limited. The addition of a USAID officer in Havana would be a step toward more effective programming, communication, and reliable monitoring and evaluation of in-country activities.
- ▶ **Assign additional full-time employees at USAID headquarters to manage the Program.** This is a complex program with many competing demands from grantees, other U.S. Government agencies, donors, and the international press. Staffing now consists of a Senior Advisor/Coordinator for Cuba supported by a newly hired junior officer. The Program's effectiveness is diminished by its limited staffing.
- ▶ **Identify and prepare relevant operating units within USAID for a transition in Cuba.** Offices within USAID that would likely play a role in a transition in Cuba should begin preparing themselves now. For instance, the Office of Transition Initiatives within the Bureau for Humanitarian Response should assign an officer to maintain regular contact with the Cuba Program staff in the Latin America and Caribbean Bureau.
- ▶ **Revise the Program's policy prohibiting funding to groups or individuals within Cuba.** The ability of grantees and their partners to operate within Cuba is severely constrained by the policy prohibiting subgranting or provision of even small amounts of funding to people on the island. In addition to Cuba, USAID is working in several other countries such as Serbia where the incumbent government views the pro-democracy forces assisted by USAID as a real or potential threat. Even though there might also be risks to Program partners in these countries, USAID has allowed sub-granting to in-country partners.
- ▶ **Open the dialogue between USAID and other donors regarding the promotion of democracy in Cuba.** While USAID stays informed of the activities of other donors, senior USAID staff should reach out to those donors who could play a role in the transition in Cuba.
- ▶ **Establish a system for information collection, analysis, and sharing among grantees and Program personnel.** The Program is constrained by inadequate information

collection, analysis, and dissemination concerning the Cuban operational environment and the activities of various grantees, donors, and Cuban actors. The Program would benefit from an increased emphasis on systematically collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information related to the environment within Cuba and the impact of the Cuba Program.

- ▶ **Encourage information sharing through more frequent use of grantee meetings, conference calls, and other forms of group communication.**¹⁵ While respecting the unique needs and activities of each grantee, USAID should create incentives for the sharing of information among all of its partners. USAID should take the lead in establishing an expanded dialogue among grantees and consider the willingness and capacity of individual grantees to share information with others working on Cuban issues in making grants awards and reviewing grantee performance.
- ▶ **Continue providing day-to-day guidance to grantees regarding USAID procedures.** USAID has recognized that several of the Program grantees require extensive guidance with regard to the USAID regulations related to foreign assistance programs. A continuing emphasis on this type of day-to-day support is necessary as grantees continue their work and as new grantees are brought into the Program.
- ▶ **Commission additional political risk analysis and transition studies on Cuba.** The Program would be strengthened through additional transition planning and political risk analysis done in cooperation with senior Program staff and appropriate grantees. USAID's capacity to move quickly in the event of a sudden shift in the Cuban situation requires dynamic scenario planning. These analyses and plans should be shared and discussed with Program grantees to ensure that they inform their work.
- ▶ **Test all informational products before duplication and dissemination to Cuban audiences.** This Program is about information. USAID and its grantees expend considerable resources to develop and deliver informational products to the Cuban people. The products funded by the Program should be test marketed through focus groups with recent arrivals from Cuba or through a similar research methodology to determine the appropriateness, relevance, and potential impact of the message and delivery vehicle.
- ▶ **Seek innovative channels for distributing information to Cuba.** While many of the materials funded by the Program are reaching people on the island, some are confiscated or go undistributed. USAID and its partners should seek to expand the channels used to deliver their information to the Cuban people.
- ▶ **Encourage the cooperation and development of consortia among grantees.** Synergies and administrative cost savings could be created among various grantees through consortia and informal grouping of grantees. The knowledge of traditional democracy-promotion groups would be complemented through formal cooperation with Cuban-American groups and other groups with a Cuba-specific focus and vice versa.
- ▶ **Adjust the degree of publicity concerning grants in recognition of the potential risks to grantees and their clients in Cuba.** While many aspects of the Program lend themselves to wide publicity as part of a public-diplomacy effort, some activities can be jeopardized by inappropriate publicity. USAID, Members of Congress and their staffs, and other personnel involved in the Program should exercise considerable discretion in the publicity they release regarding Program activities.
- ▶ **Improve Program performance baselines and measures.** The promotion of democracy in Cuba will not be a linear process and does not easily lend itself to strict quantitative analysis. The *Government Performance and Results Act* allows for the use of qualitative measures as long as there is a consistent and credible methodology employed. The use of qualitative measures would allow the Program to manage activities more effectively and to communicate results to key stakeholders. Grantees should adopt performance measures that relate to the intermediate results to which they contribute and that allow them to report

their results to USAID clearly and with limited effort. The evaluation recommends that USAID expand its dialogue with grantees on performance measurement as a step toward the development of new indicators that are more useful for Program management and the communication of results to stakeholders.

¹⁵ USAID has held two coordination meetings to date (February 1999 in Washington, DC and May 2000 in Miami).



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Appendix A: Descriptions of Cuba Program Grantee Activities

1. American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS)

The American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS) is supported by the AFL-CIO and was formed when four NGOs affiliated with the AFL-CIO merged in 1997. The American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) was the NGO that had worked extensively in Latin America.

Funded at \$168,575 on January 28, 1998, and extended once until June 2000, the ACILS grant operates in three intermediate results areas: solidarity with human rights activists, defending Cuban workers' rights, and direct outreach. It has three main goals: leveraging labor rights for Cuban workers, assisting independent unions, and promoting better business practices for corporations investing in Cuba.

ACILS has pursued these goals by: studying Cuban labor organizations; sending representatives to international union meetings where the official Cuban trade union, the Cuban Workers Confederation (CTC), was participating; meeting directly with Cuban independent union representatives; encouraging international and regional trade unions to advocate fair labor practices in Cuba; pressuring other governments to advocate fair labor practices in Cuba; and promoting better business practices, especially for labor, for firms investing in Cuba. ACILS is also promoting better business practices for firms investing in Cuba by collaborating with another Cuba Program grantee, the National Policy Association.

Specific accomplishments include:

- ▶ ACILS contracted Dr. Guillermo Grenier, Director of the Florida Center for Labor Research and Studies and Florida International University Associate Professor of Sociology and Anthropology, to prepare two reports. The first—an analytical report of multinational investments in Cuba—examines the worker rights records of several industries in Cuba and documents human and worker rights violations. The report also analyzes the Cuban labor code, constitution, foreign investment law, and health and safety codes. The second report provides an analysis of the organization, capacity, and credibility of the existing independent labor organizations and individual labor activists in Cuba.
- ▶ In December 1998, a delegation of the Inter-American Regional Organization of Workers (ORIT) of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (the AFL-CIO also participated in this delegation) attended an International Labor Organization-sponsored conference in Cuba to assess political, social, and economic conditions, and to establish contact with counterparts in the official and independent labor movements.
- ▶ On March 5, 1999, following the closed trial of the "Group of Four¹," AFL-CIO President John Sweeney wrote a letter to Fidel Castro urging immediate release of the Group of Four as well as hundreds of others imprisoned for exercising freedoms guaranteed by the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights.

Several factors have complicated the work of ACILS and have led to one grant extension: lack of

information on Cuba's unions and difficulties in communicating and partnering with the independent sector caused delays in carrying out in-depth research necessary for full implementation of the grant. International trade unions in the Americas and elsewhere have expressed disagreement with the AFL-CIO's position on the U.S. trade embargo of Cuba and other matters. These disagreements have hampered cooperation with ACILS on proposed activities. The Cuban Workers Federation has confronted ACILS delegates at an international conference over the specifics of its USAID grant. Apparently, the source of funding for ACILS work related to Cuba has caused some union representatives in the Americas and elsewhere to be more reticent about actively participating in ACILS Cuba initiatives. On the island itself, cooperation by Cuban nationals with the Helms-Burton Act-funded programs is illegal under Cuban law, and has thus increased the difficulty of working directly with Cubans.

2. Center for a Free Cuba (CFC)

The Center for a Free Cuba (CFC) was established in late 1997 to promote democratic transition in Cuba. Building on the Eastern European transition model and the experience of its leadership working on Cuban human rights matters, CFC focuses on the promotion of human rights in Cuba. Its executive director worked previously on Cuba programs at Freedom House, the recipient of USAID Cuba Program's first grant.

CFC was funded at \$400,000 in April 1998. An amendment was later provided to add \$500,000 and to extend the project until August 2000. The Center for a Free Cuba is now the Cuba Program's second largest grantee. The CFC project works in three intermediate results areas: building solidarity with Cuba's human rights activists, promoting independent NGOs, and reaching out directly to the Cuban people. Its activities also touch on the Program's remaining three intermediate results: transition planning, workers' rights, and independent journalism. It has three goals: producing and distributing human rights materials in Cuba, supporting nascent civil society, and encouraging international support for human rights and democracy in Cuba.

CFC has pursued these goals by providing Spanish-language books, pamphlets and other materials to the Cuban people on issues such as human rights, transition to democracy and free market economic; sending office equipment to Cuba; promoting on-island visits to representatives of civil society, dissidents, and independent journalists; calling attention to Cuban human rights abuses; hosting in the US and visiting abroad luminaries of Europe's post-communist societies; making numerous media appearances and contacts; organizing policy seminars for Congressional staffers and Members of Congress.

Specific accomplishments include:

- ▶ The Center provided 40 fax machines to independent Cuban NGOs in 1998.
- ▶ CFC sent seven missions to Cuba, including a group of central European representatives from private relief and human rights organizations. This group met with human rights activists, dissidents, independent journalists, community leaders, independent librarians and families of political prisoners.
- ▶ CFC sent to Cuba a total of 29,460 books/publications and 71 video cassettes on democracy and human rights. The total includes 22,942 copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- ▶ The Center distributed medical supplies and communications equipment to pro-democracy and human rights activists in Cuba.
- ▶ CFC published and distributed 1,000 copies of its report, "The Papal Journey on Balance: the Response to Date" to NGOs, government officials and the media throughout Latin America and Europe. The report catalogues ongoing abuses of human rights illustrated by the incarceration of such Cuban political prisoners as Marta Beatríz Roque, Félix Antonio

Bonne Carcassés, Rene Gómez Manzano and Vladimiro Roca.

Several factors have complicated CFC's work. Cuba's repressive political environment makes it difficult for Cubans to contact the program or be contacted by it and limits the distribution channels for materials. The US Interests Section in Havana has limited personnel to engage in either distribution or end-use monitoring of materials.

3. Cuba Dissidence Task Group (CDTG)

The CDTG was created to support the activities of dissident groups in Cuba, especially the "Group of Four": economist Marta Beatriz Roque; Felix Antonio Bonne Carcasses, an engineer; Rene Gomez Manzano, a lawyer; and Vladimiro Roca, a former MIG fighter pilot and son of founding Cuban Communist Party member, Blas Roca. The four were arrested in July 1997 for publishing a pamphlet, *The Homeland Belongs to All of Us*, which calls for a peaceful national dialogue on political and economic reform. After 19 months of imprisonment without charge, the four were put on trial in March 1999 for sedition and sentenced to prison terms from three-and-a-half to five years. The Cuban Government closed the trial to the Cuban public, the free press, and the international diplomatic community. In May and June 2000, three of the Group of Four were granted a conditional release from prison. Vladimiro Roca remains in jail.

The CDTG also more generally supports the cause of human rights in Cuba. The CDTG actively participates in the United Nations Human Rights Commission's annual review of human rights around the world. Funded at \$250,000, and completed in September 1999, the project's activities focused primarily on helping groups promote human rights and support dissidents on the island, and secondarily on developing independent NGOs.

Specific accomplishments include:

- ▶ The Task Group helped win international support for the work of the "Group of Four" by publishing and disseminating worldwide their work, as well as the work of the centers they founded:
 - ▶ The Civil Society and Democracy Center, which seeks to empower the emerging Cuban civil society through analysis of national and international political developments;
 - ▶ The Business and Economics Center, which analyzes the Cuban economy and trains Cuban professional economists in free market economics;
 - ▶ The Felix Varela Law Center, which supports Cuban lawyers in their research of Cuban legal institutions and laws that must be eliminated or modified to permit a peaceful transition from totalitarianism to democracy;
 - ▶ The Labor Center, which analyzes and promotes collective bargaining, labor processes and the formation of independent labor unions on the island.
- ▶ The Task Group sent 10 packages of humanitarian assistance (food and medicine) to political prisoners and their families and to other victims of egregious political repression (e.g., those who have lost their employment or have been physically attacked because of their peaceful human rights activities.)
- ▶ The Task Group received, analyzed, transcribed, translated, published and disseminated 18 bulletins, 44 working papers and 8 reports. The CDTG issued 32 press releases based on these materials. Topics included a report on the prisons in Las Villas province prepared by Odilia Collazo, president of the Pro Human Rights Party; and an analysis of Cuban laws written by Rene Gomez Manzano; as well as assessments of the Cuban economy and current political situation.
- ▶ The Task Group sent more than 8,000 books and pamphlets to the island. This material included *La Patria es de Todos*; Vaclav Havel's "*El Reto de la Esperanza*;" *OAS Manual de Denuncias de Derechos Humanos*; IFES' *Manual sobre las elecciones democraticas*; and

the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Several factors have complicated the Task Group's work. According to its founder, Ruth Montaner, its small size and lack of experience with USAID procedures have created an administrative burden, distracting the Task Group from its core activities. In addition, the grantee has received bomb threats and suffered petty harassment throughout the course of its activities from what are believed to be Cuban government representatives working in the United States.

4. Cuba Free Press (CFP)

The CFP was founded in 1997 to provide a platform for the publication and distribution of articles by Cuban independent journalists and writers through the Internet and email. In response to the evaluation team's request for a meeting with CFP in Miami, the CFP responded with a letter stating that, "as we will have no relationship with USAID, other than the pending closure of the relationship, much to our regret, we will not be able to meet with your three member team."

Funded with a \$280,000 grant in May 1998 and ended in February 2000, the CFP worked in the intermediate results area of giving voice to independent journalists and writers inside Cuba. It also indirectly supported human rights activists and the development of independent NGOs. The grantee's written response to the team indicated that the web site had received more than 225,000 hits and that 172,000 documents were downloaded by nearly 13,000 different URLs. The CFP also published 36 newsletters in Spanish and 19 in English.

In its letter to the evaluation team, the grantee reported extensive difficulties in its relationship with USAID during the implementation of grant activities.

5. CubaNet

Founded in 1994, CubaNet obtains daily independent reporting from inside Cuba, translates much of it into English, French, and German, and posts it on the www.cubanet.org web site. CubaNet also serves as a portal for news articles relating to Cuba published in the United States and third countries.

Funded initially at \$98,000 and extended through April 2001 with total funding of \$343,000, CubaNet works in the intermediate results area of giving voice to independent journalists and writers inside Cuba. The primary distribution vehicle for information is the CubaNet's web site and e-mail bulletin.

Specific accomplishments include:

- ▶ CubaNet developed and maintained a Web site averaging 750,000 hits per month with links from International news organizations such as CNN, the BBC, and NBC.
- ▶ CubaNet provided on-going distribution of a daily e-mail bulletin to 1,700 subscribers.
- ▶ CubaNet highlighted awareness of the nascent independent press and non-governmental sector within Cuba and encouraged communication between CubaNet readers and independent sector representatives.

Several factors have complicated CubaNet's work. CubaNet activities suffer from the difficult operating environment in Cuba. The grantee reported that this difficulty stems from political repression and the difficulty in assessing how information flows within Cuba. CubaNet's small size and relative lack of experience with USAID procedures have created an administrative burden, distracting the CubaNet from its core activities. CubaNet also faces the challenge of translating a large amount of time-sensitive material quickly. The Florida International University -- International

Media Center (FIU-IMC), a USAID Cuba Program grantee, works with CubaNet to translate many of CubaNet's materials into English, but has reportedly had some difficulty handling the volume of translation and the need for rapid turnaround.

6. Cuba On-Line

Originally funded at \$300,000 through August 2000 and extended with an additional \$500,000 until August 2001, Cuba On-Line provides direct outreach to the Cuban people by providing accurate, uncensored news about Cuba and the world. Cuba On-Line produces the newsletter Sin Censura that is distributed inside Cuba to human rights activists, independent journalists, dissidents, religious leaders, business and professional people, government officials, cultural leaders, and members of the general population. The print edition is distributed to 4,200 readers. The newsletter is also distributed to more than 450 e-mail accounts in Cuba. Cuba On-Line collaborates with other grantees by providing them copies of the newsletter to distribute inside Cuba. The newsletter publishes material from western wire services and other reputable news sources. The content of the newsletter is focused on issues of transition to democracy, free markets, and human rights.

Thus far, Cuba On-Line's major challenge has been ensuring that the newsletter reaches intended recipients without interference.

7. Florida International University - International Media Center (FIU-IMC)

The FIU-IMC helps improve the professional skills of Cuba's independent journalists. Staffed by academics with experience as journalists in Latin America, the International Media Center had previously operated a multi-year journalism program in Latin America.

This grant was funded at \$292,000 on February 1, 1999. While still in the initial phase of implementation, unexpected start-up delays led to a one-year, no-cost extension through January 2001. This program operates in the intermediate result area of giving voice to Cuba's independent journalists. It also touches on several others: solidarity with human rights activists, helping independent NGOs, direct outreach to the people, and transition planning.

The FIU-IMC program operates a news desk for editing and training and offers distance learning courses. The grantee's distance-learning curricula and materials have been refined over several years through the group's work in Latin America. FIU-IMC is also translating some independent journalists' work for another grantee, CubaNet. A journalism workshop is pending.

Several factors have complicated the FIU-IMC's work. Cuba's repressive political regime makes it difficult to communicate with students. In addition, while FIU-IMC works with CubaNet, somewhat divergent needs frustrate close cooperation. FIU-IMC is concerned with editing and improving the work of independent Cuban journalists. CubaNet places a priority on publishing timely information and has been unable in some cases to wait for FIU-IMC's work on a particular article to conclude.

8. Freedom House

Freedom House was founded nearly 60 years ago by Eleanor Roosevelt, Wendell Wilkie, and other Americans concerned with the mounting threats to peace and democracy, and has labored in this field ever since. It is perhaps best known for its annual evaluation and reports on the status of democracy and human rights, *Freedom in the World*.

For Freedom House, the USAID Cuba Program agreement is one of a number of projects within a larger enterprise of promoting democracy. The ongoing Cuba project was funded at \$275,000 in 1999 and followed an earlier \$500,000 Transitions project, which was the first grant

awarded under USAID's Cuba Program. In 2000, the organization has doubled its funding for Cuba, receiving \$550,000 for Program activities. (The first Cuba project of Freedom House gave rise to another grantee, the Center for a Free Cuba). Center for a Free Cuba's founder and director headed the first Freedom House Cuba project before departing Freedom House to establish the Center.

Freedom House's current program works in three intermediate result areas: seeking out and sending to Cuba politicians, journalists, and community activists from East-Central Europe who have experience in democratic transition; promoting partnerships in democracy between Cuban dissidents who want to create NGOs on the island and experts who have built NGOs in other authoritarian regimes; and publishing and distributing in Cuba small brochures about democratic transition written by Eastern Europeans such as Czech President Vaclav Havel.

Specific accomplishments include:

- ▶ Freedom House organized training visit to Cuba for 12 persons from East-Central Europe. The program participants included: four journalists, four members of parliament; two economists; a government official; and an academic.
- ▶ Under the Transitions project, Freedom House provided 40,000 Spanish-language books, pamphlets and other materials to the Cuban people on issues such as human rights, transition to democracy and free market economics.

Freedom House's work has been complicated by Government of Cuba opposition to pro-democracy activities on the island.

9. Institute for Democracy in Cuba (IDC)

The IDC is a coalition of organizations founded in 1996 from several small Cuban-American organizations.

Originally funded at \$400,000 in April 1998 and extended for a second year for \$600,000 through October 2000, the Institute for Democracy in Cuba is the Program's largest grantee. The Institute works in three intermediate results areas: building solidarity with Cuba's human rights activists, promoting independent NGOs, and direct outreach to the Cuban people. Its activities also partially involve the Program's remaining three intermediate results: transition planning, workers' rights, and independent journalism.

Specific accomplishments include:

- ▶ IDC delivered more than 6,000 pounds of food and medicine to the families of political prisoners and to other victims of repression throughout the island.
- ▶ IDC sent more than 400 books to Cuba that dealt with civil society and human rights, as well as the writings of Cuba's human rights activists.
- ▶ IDC sent to the island 2,000 copies of its periodical, *Somos Uno*, every month.

Several factors have complicated the IDC's work. While IDC effectively pools the resources and talents of the coalition members, its leadership appeared to the evaluation team to suffer from conflicting policy positions and arguments over programming resources. In seeking to sustain and promote Cuban NGOs and introduce democracy-related materials to the island, the IDC has encountered several operational difficulties: extreme repression by the regime that increases risks to clients, interference with communications, occasional seizure of materials by Cuban customs, break-ins to its Miami headquarters, high delivery costs, and limited delivery channels for material.

10. International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES)

The International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) is a private, nonprofit organization established in 1987 to provide nonpartisan technical assistance in the promotion of democracy worldwide and serve as a clearinghouse for information about democratic development and elections.

Funded at \$136,000 by the USAID Cuba Program, IFES prepared a study of the Cuban election system and suggested options for future Cuban election reforms under the transition planning intermediate result area. After four no-cost extensions, the grant was completed on July 31, 1999. IFES brought to the grant extensive prior collaboration with USAID and its considerable in-house expertise and information resources on elections and election systems. IFES staff and consultants researched and wrote the Cuban election document, and translated, abridged, and distributed it on a limited basis to relevant US government agencies and other grantees. Abridged Spanish-language copies have been forwarded to the US Interests Section in Havana for distribution.

Several factors complicated IFES' work. IFES personnel reported that the study suffered to an extent from IFES' inability to visit Cuba and meet election officials. In addition, IFES found a reluctance on the part of some US-based academic Cuba experts to consult on the project. IFES staff expressed disappointment that constraints were imposed on the distribution of and publicity about their report in the United States. (On May 9, 2000 the IFES report was posted on the USAID web site). IFES staff also expressed some frustration and surprise at the contentious nature of the Cuba policy arena.

11. International Republican Institute (IRI)

The International Republican Institute (IRI), a not-for-profit and nonpartisan organization advancing principles inspired by former U.S. President Ronald Reagan, conducts programs outside the United States to promote democracy and strengthen free markets and the rule of law.

USAID originally funded IRI's Cuba project at \$335,462 in November 1997, later gave the grantee two no-cost extensions, and then gave IRI a funded extension for an additional year for \$389,000 through June 10, 2000. IRI, working through its subgrantee the *Directorio Revolucionario Democrático Cubano (Directorio)*, operates in three of the Program's intermediate result areas: building solidarity with Cuba's human rights activists, promoting independent NGOs, and direct outreach to the Cuban people. It also undertakes secondary activity in the area of giving voice to independent journalists.

The grantee and its sub-grantee promote solidarity links that support human rights and political freedom in Cuba by encouraging the formation of third party groups, stimulating direct political and diplomatic pressure on the Cuban government on human rights and political freedom, supporting independent Cuban NGOs and creating linkages between Cuban and third country NGOs with similar goals.

Specific accomplishments by IRI and its sub-grantee, the *Directorio*, the *Directorio's* associated Solidarity Committees, and the Boitel international solidarity network include:

Political/Ideological Support

The Boitel international solidarity network supported a Cuban pro-freedom movement campaign initiated shortly after the enactment of Law 88 through coordinated events in cities throughout Latin America and Europe. Law 88 enacted in early 1999 established sanctions of up to 20 years for activities such as independent journalism and dissemination of information outside state channels. To continue their work in the increasingly repressive climate, the pro-democracy movement urgently needed international solidarity. The activities mounted by the Boitel network

served to strengthen the Cuban pro-freedom movement in critical ways. International recognition-not only of their cause, but also of their specific campaign-enabled the pro-freedom movement to continue struggling as the cost of doing so increased.

In preparation for the November 1999 Iberoamerican Summit to be held in Havana, the Boitel network organized activities to educate attending countries about the Cuban internal democratic opposition and solicit international solidarity with their efforts.

In September 1999, the Dominican Solidarity Committee provided information about Cuban political prisoners and leaders of the democratic opposition to several interested Dominican legislators. They followed up with the legislators over a period of weeks to answer additional questions. In late October 1999, the Dominican Senate passed a resolution in support of the Cuban democratic opposition and requesting that human rights be respected and free elections held in the island.

Based on information provided by the Mexican Solidarity Committee, four Mexican Senators wrote letters to the Cuban government before the Iberoamerican Summit. The Senators asked the Cuban government to comply with the terms of the Viña del Mar and Rio de Janeiro agreements. These agreements enshrine respect for human rights, political pluralism, basic freedoms, rule of law, and representative democracy. They further requested that Cuba legalize all opposition political parties and civic institutions and hold free elections under international supervision.

In June 1998, high-ranking members of the Cuban Communist party met with several Mexican Congressmen in Mexico City. Briefed in advance by the Mexico Solidarity Committee, the Congressmen asked the Cubans if they would be willing to implement a pluralist political process with competition from contrary parties and to adopt the principles outlined in the *Agreement for Democracy*. The Mexicans also asked about the release of political prisoners and the adoption of a general amnesty that would include eliminating the category of political crime from the Cuban penal code. Not accustomed to such inquiries, the Cubans reportedly were taken aback and lamely responded they would study the issues only if the United States lifted its embargo. Significantly, they acknowledged there were political prisoners in Cuba, but blamed that reality on U.S. policy toward Cuba.

Pro-democracy activists in Cuba organized several events to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, on December 10, 1998. The Boitel Campaign solidarity network actively supported these efforts, particularly in response to the government's repression.

Dominican and Mexican Solidarity Committees continued their outreach efforts to domestic organizations with an interest in Cuban affairs, such as the Dominican-Cuban Committee, the Dominican Fraternal Order, the Consensus Movement; and in Mexico, pro-life, student, and women's organizations. The Solidarity Committees provided information such as the **Mothers' Movement for a General Amnesty** video, copies of *Steps to Freedom*, *Agreement for Democracy*, *Kilo 8*, and other materials that provide a foundation for generating greater political and ideological support for the pro-freedom movement in Cuba.

In meetings, conferences, and conversations in Spain, the Netherlands, and Belgium, *Directorio* representatives provided current, accurate information on the pro-freedom movement to interested audiences.

In meetings, conferences, and conversations in Argentina and Chile, *Directorio* representatives provided current, accurate information on the pro-freedom movement to interested audiences.

Material Support

Solidarity Committees in several countries worked together throughout 1999 to support the Independent Libraries Movement in Cuba. Over 600 books were successfully delivered through

IRI and its sub-grantee to independent cultural institutions throughout Cuba despite the constant threat of censorship and confiscation of materials.

Moral Support

Solidarity Committees have collected supportive statements by civil society activists and leaders in Cuba have about the importance of international solidarity efforts to provide moral support.

Establishing Linkages/Ties

Substantial linkages among international leaders and the Cuban opposition have been facilitated through the efforts of IRI and the *Directorio*.

Disseminating Information

Program activities often result in the publication of articles about the Cuban situation in foreign newspapers as well as interviews of *Directorio* members on radio and television programs. Most of the information for these stories is provided by Solidarity Committee members working with the press. A major focus of the program's work is to facilitate the publication of articles written in Cuba by pro-freedom activists, and the participation of Cuban pro-freedom leaders on radio programs in other countries.

IRI staff reported that the length of the USAID award process delayed the implementation of activities but that these delays have never seriously impacted the success of the project.

12. National Policy Association (NPA)

The National Policy Association was founded in 1934 as the National Economic and Social Planning Association to promote business-labor dialogue on issues of vital significance to the security and prosperity of the United States.

The NPA's work on Cuba focuses primarily in the intermediate results area of defending human rights and the rights of Cuban workers. The NPA's Cuba project works to promote adherence by international private sector firms investing or considering investing in Cuba to certain fundamental principles, including workplace health and safety, fair employment practices, direct employment, and the right to organize and bargain collectively. The \$225,000 grant was made in October 1999 and extends until October 2000.

The NPA organized a June 2000 conference in Mexico City on worker rights and best business practices in Cuba. The conference featured high-level speakers in the area of corporate codes of conduct, the Cuban economy, and the labor situation in Cuba today. NPA has also secured the participation of several USAID Cuba Program grantees as well as a number of leading organizations working in the fields of international business practices and labor rights.

After three rounds of interagency and internal reviews, an extended hold by Congress delayed the grant and its implementation until October 1999.

13. Pan American Development Foundation (PADF)

Established in 1962 as a subsidiary of the Organization of American States, the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF) is an independent, nonprofit organization that works to improve the quality of life in Latin America and the Caribbean. Its programs strengthen local NGOs, municipalities and the private sector in the region, so that they can better assist the least advantaged people.

Funded at \$236,700 the PADF's agreement with USAID's Cuba Program began in September 1998 and runs through August 2000. The PADF works in the intermediate results area of promoting the development of Cuban independent NGOs.

Specific accomplishments include the development of a knowledge base on the environmental NGO community in Cuba and a clearer understanding of their needs to promote an environmental agenda.

Several factors complicated some of PADF's work thus far. PADF initially intended to organize an exchange with Cuban environmentalists and their Central American counterparts at a symposium that would be hosted by an El Salvadorian environmental NGO. This program could not be implemented after tensions between Cuba and El Salvador escalated when a Salvadorian was jailed in Havana, charged with committing acts of terrorism.

PADF also had several meetings with ProNaturaleza, a Cuban NGO, and had planned to sponsor leaders in the environmental NGO community from Ecuador and several Central American countries to participate in a symposium that ProNaturaleza was sponsoring in Cuba. However, PADF was informed shortly before the date of the event that the Cuban Government would not allow PADF-sponsored participants to attend.

As a result of these complications, PADF is focusing its efforts on providing technical material and support (books, equipment, etc.) to independent environmental groups and independent libraries throughout Cuba.

14. Partners of the Americas

Partners of the Americas was created in 1964, during the Alliance for Progress, as a way for U.S. and Latin American volunteers to become involved in promoting leadership exchanges and self-help development activities. Today, Partners activities also include environmental and democratization programs.

This project was funded at \$172,139 of which \$20,587 was returned to USAID and is awaiting de-obligation by USAID. Partners promoted the development of links between Cuban NGOs and professional organizations and similar groups in Latin American and the Caribbean.

The project called for an exchange of 19 people to and from Cuba. A total of 22 people participated in the exchanges, of whom 19 were fully funded and 3 were partially funded by the Cuba Program. Ten people visited Cuba and 12 Cubans traveled abroad. The project was implemented by working through NGOs and professional associations in Latin America and the Caribbean which made contacts with Cuban counterparts and developed details of the exchanges in cooperation with Partners.

Several factors complicated project implementation. Final approval of the project was uncertain and delayed. In addition, the Government of Cuba's adoption of measures criminalizing cooperation with the USAID Cuba Program created a legal scenario in which individuals receiving even indirect assistance, such as a travel grant, could be punished severely. The adoption of this Cuban legislation led Partners to terminate the project before all USAID funds were expended. Partners stated that many of the obstacles were anticipated at the beginning of the project, but not to the degree actually encountered.

15. Rutgers University

Funded at \$99,000, the Rutgers University grant was used to organize a conference in May 1999 aimed primarily at the intermediate result of planning for transition to democracy in Cuba and related post-conference activities. Eight papers were presented ranging from the likely impact of transition on various strata of Cuban society to infrastructure requirements during earlier and latter

stages in this transition. The grant expires in August 2000.

It is difficult to gauge the effectiveness of any particular study presented at a conference, but the organizers considered that the meeting and its papers represented a new step in discussion regarding the risks in Cuban transition and the plan for alternative scenarios. The conference involved cooperation among senior scholars and policy personnel from Rutgers University and other universities.

The conference organizer and grantee, Prof. Irving Horowitz, noted that despite his long prior administrative experience, the amount of time and effort needed to process the paper work for USAID was considerably greater than expected.

The grantee requested and received a one-year extension on this grant, which was necessary for editing, processing, and publishing the papers as the final section of the tenth edition of the book *Cuban Communism* to be published by Transaction Press.

16. Sabre Foundation

Since 1969, the Sabre Foundation has collected and donated books and educational materials to libraries and educational institutions in developing countries.

A grant of \$85,000 was approved in February 1998 and continues to operate though no-cost extensions through July 2000. The Sabre Foundation works in the intermediate results areas of promoting independent NGOs and direct outreach to the Cuban people.

Specific accomplishments include the delivery of books on democracy, human rights, market economies, and other issues to independent groups and individuals in Cuba.

Several factors have complicated the work of the Sabre Foundation. USAID required that the Sabre Foundation ship books on politics and economics rather than just client-ordered technical materials; congressional concern caused delays; early publicity of the program complicated implementation; and the proposed local partner backed out after causing lengthy start up delays. Sabre has received grant extensions, has found new Cuban clients, and developed alternative delivery means for materials. Ultimately Sabre's delivery costs escalated sharply above originally anticipated levels while materials delivered declined substantially.

17. U.S.-Cuba Business Council (USCBC)

The U.S.-Cuba Business Council was established in 1993 and has sought to become an interlocutor between large U.S. firms and South Florida businesses and Cuba in the eventuality of a free-market transition.

Funded at \$267,380 for the first year and \$300,000 for the second year, the project was completed in June 2000. The USCBC works in the intermediate results area of providing support for the planning of assistance to a post-Castro Cuba, especially helping the US private sector to prepare for Cuba's eventual transition to a free market regime. It also worked in the intermediate result area of helping develop NGOs. Some equipment and some humanitarian assistance was sent to the island as well. The US-Cuban Business Council is assisted in the humanitarian support by AGRIDEC, a dissident support group.

Specific accomplishments include:

- ▶ USCBC published its "Cuba Voices" newsletter Transition Cuba in both English and Spanish, which is distributed through intermediaries.

- ▶ USCBC broadcast bimonthly programs on Radio Marti concerning free market economics and democratic institutions.
- ▶ USCBC commissioned several studies of different sectors of the Cuban economy: 90 percent of firms surveyed indicated strong commercial interest in Cuba once U.S. restrictions on trade are lifted. However, only about 30 percent of the firms said they would be likely to explore business opportunities in Cuba under a mixed economy which retained many of the Cuban government's current economic and political controls. About 50 percent would be likely to establish Cuban subsidiaries. About 20 percent of these firms currently have U.S. certified property or asset claims against Cuba.
- ▶ USCBC hosted three conferences on Cuba's economic future in New York, Washington DC and Miami. In June 1998, the first USCBC conference (New York City, Council of the Americas) discussed "Financial Sector Reform and Cuba's Future in the Global Economy." The conference identified key weaknesses in the Cuban financial and banking sectors, which will seriously impede the transition to free market democracy in Cuba. The conference discussed conditions for future macro-economic stability in Cuba. Participants included 60 U.S. private sector and public sector representatives as well as officials from the international financial institutions. The second conference (October 1998, Washington D.C.) focused on small business and free labor development in a transitional Cuba. The third conference (November 10, 1998, Miami) analyzed the needs of Cuba's industrial infrastructure during a future transition to democracy. At the final conference (March 8, 1999, Miami), "Support for a Free Market Democratic Transition in Cuba," the USCBC presented its survey of 55 U.S. Corporate 1000 companies, as well as the five reports produced by its Cuba Research Working Group (on the status of Cuba's industrial infrastructure; the status of the financial sector; building private enterprise and independent labor organizations, and Cuba's economic transition: challenges and solutions).

Several factors have complicated the USCBC's work. Staff reported that the cost of the administration of the USAID grant is an obstacle because the amount of work is greater than anticipated. They requested that USAID tailor some administrative requirements to the needs and limited resources of very small NGOs. Staff also reported difficulties working with a closed society such as Cuba.

¹ See the section in this appendix on the activities of the Cuban Dissidence Task Group for a description of the Group of Four.



The United States Agency for International Development

Appendix B: Persons Interviewed

Fulton Armstrong

Former Deputy Director
Inter-American Affairs
National Security Council

Kaylin A. Bailey

International Program Associate
National Policy Association

Belinda Barrington

Office of General Counsel
USAID

Margaret Bartel

Consultant
Center for a Free Cuba

Rosa Berre

Coordinator
CubaNet

Ernesto Betancourt

Independent Consultant

John Bolsteins

Foreign Policy Analyst
Foreign Policy Controls Division
Office of Strategic Trade and Foreign Policy Controls
US Department of Commerce

Robert Boncy

Team Leader, Caribbean Region
Office of Strategy & Portfolio Management
Bureau for Latin America & the Caribbean

Frank Calzon

Executive Director
Center for a Free Cuba

Ana Carbonell

District Director
Office of Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart

Jodi B. Christiansen

Democratic Staff Director
Subcommittee on International
Economic Policy and Trade

House Committee on International Relations

Gillian Gunn Clissold

Director
Georgetown University Caribbean Project

Thomas E. Cox

U.S. Cuba Business Council

Guillermo Cueto

Regional Director
U.S. Cuba-Business Council

Jorge Dalmao

Program Officer
International Media Center
Florida International University

Clara David

Office of Foreign Assets Control
US Department of the Treasury

Benjamin Davis

Coordinator, Americas
American Center for International Labor Solidarity

Michael Deal

Deputy Assistant Administrator
Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean
USAID

Jeffrey Delaurentis

First Secretary for Political and Economic Affairs
Unites States Interest Section
Havana, Cuba

James S. Denton

Executive Director
Freedom House

Kate Doherty

Deputy Director for Administration and Evaluation
American Center for Interational Labor Solidarity

Jorge Dominguez

Professor
Harvard University

Dana Doo-Soghoian

Office of Procurement
Management Bureau
USAID

Deborah L. Elliott

Office of Economic Sanctions Policy
Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs

US Department of State

Juan Carlos Espinosa
University of Miami

Don Finberg
Partners of the Americas

Daniel F. Fisk
Deputy Director
Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis International Studies Center
The Heritage Foundation

Jose A. Font
Consejo Cubano para la Democracia
Civil Society Building and Formation
Institute for Democracy in Cuba

John Fox
Director
Washington Office
Open Society Institute

Stanley A. Gacek
Assistant Director
International Affairs Department
AFL-CIO

Patricio Gajardo
Director
The Americas
International Foundation for Election Systems

Jose Garriga
Office of Democracy Promotion
Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor
US Department of State

Lazaro Gonzalez
Assistant
CubaNet

Juan Granados ¹
President
Cuba Free Press

Charles H. Green
Director
International Media Center
Florida International University

Orlando Gutierrez
Director
Directorio Revolucionario Democratico Cubano

Henry Hamman

Cuba On-Line

Frank Hernandez-Trujillo

Director
Grupo de Apoyo a la Disidencia
Institute for Democracy in Cuba

Ismael Hernandez

Deputy Director
Grupo de Apoyo a la Disidencia
Institute for Democracy in Cuba

Jose Hernandez

President
CubaNet

Gwenn Hofmann

Senior Human Resources Advisor
International Foundation for Election Systems

Caryn Hollis

Deputy Director Inter-American Affairs
National Security Council

Irving Louis Horowitz

Professor
Rutgers University

Lourdes Kistler

Program Officer
American Center for International Labor Solidarity

Vicente Lago

Somos Uno
Institute for Democracy in Cuba

Bill Leogrande

Professor
American University

Vincent Mayer, Jr.

Senior Advisor
Office of Cuban Affairs
US Department of State

Ulrich Merten

Cuba On-Line

Ruth C. Montaner

President
Cuban Dissidence Task Group

Laura A. Mozeleski

Program Officer
Latin America & the Caribbean
International Republican Institute

Kathleen Murphy
Congressional Liaison Officer
Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs
USAID

David Mutchler
Senior Advisor and Coordinator for Cuba
Latin America and Caribbean Bureau
USAID

Roger F. Noriega
Senior Professional Staff Member
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate

Peter Orr
Independent Consultant
Former USAID Cuba Coordinator

Janice M. O'Connell
Professional Staff Member
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate

Philip Peters
Vice President
Lexington Institute

Harry K. Pimpong
Senior Auditor
Office of Procurement
Management Bureau
USAID

Robert Ponchitera
Program Officer
Rule of Law Initiative/Global Human Rights Training & Support Initiative
Freedom House

Joan Roberts
Director
Foreign Policy Controls Division
Office of Strategic Trade and Foreign Policy Controls
US Department of Commerce

Christopher Sabatini
Senior Program Officer
Latin America and the Caribbean
National Endowment for Democracy

Leonardo Viota Sesin
Director
Agenda Cuba
Institute for Democracy in Cuba

Jaime Suchlicki
President

Cuba On-Line, Inc.

Johanna Sullivan

Assistant
Directorio Revolucionario Democratico Cubano

Julia Sweig

Fellow and Deputy Director
Council on Foreign Relations

Ambassador Anthony C.E. Quainton

President
National Policy Association

Ambassador Otto Reich

President
U.S.-Cuba Business Council

Margaret J. Sarles

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Karen E. Seiger

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Kathleen Smith

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Steve Vermillion

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Tania Vivitsky

Project Director
Scientific Assistance Project
Sabre Foundation

Anita Winsor

Deputy Executive Director
Pan-American Development Foundation

Michael N. Zarin

Regional Program Director
Latin America and the Caribbean
International Republican Institute

Marilyn Zuckerman

Vice President
National Policy Association

¹ Mr. Granados refused to meet with the evaluation team. We did receive his correspondence in response to several of our questions related to his grant.
