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A Survey of Civil Society:

Mission Questionnaire Results,
Review of Umbrella Projects,
And Contacts with
Potential Actors and Interested Parties

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**GLOBAL BUREAU
CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY**

**CIVIL SOCIETY SURVEY:

RESULTS OF MISSION QUESTIONNAIRES,
REVIEW OF UMBRELLA PROJECTS, AND
CONTACTS WITH
POTENTIAL ACTORS AND INTERESTED PARTIES**

March 1995

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PART I:

RESULTS OF
CIVIL SOCIETY QUESTIONNAIRE

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INTRODUCTION

The Civil Society portion of the G/DG questionnaire included ten multiple choice questions. Topics included the country context in which civic organizations functioned, the types and roles of such organizations, their characteristics and capabilities, and the country Mission's plans and programs in that field.

The Civil Society Landscape

As a means of establishing a context for the civil society portion of the inquiry, the G/DG survey solicited opinions on the civil society country "landscape" of 33 USAID Missions. Missions were asked 1) whether their countries had experienced notable increases in civic and associational life, 2) the status of the media in the country, 3) whether local business/professional groups had been involved in economic reform, and 4) whether the current regulatory/legal environment constrained non-governmental activities.

Civic and Associational Life

An overwhelming majority of responding USAIDs noted a "major increase" in civic and associational life in their countries over the past 3-5 years (see Table 1). This was particularly true for the urban sector with all but three Missions reporting such growth.¹ For the rural areas, this was only somewhat less so, with six exceptions.²

¹The Colombia and Uruguay Missions did not respond while the Jamaican Mission reported a "moderate" increase.

²Non replies or reports of a moderate increase included: Argentina, Colombia, Jamaica, Uruguay, Ethiopia, and Namibia.

TABLE 1: Reported Increases in Associational Life in the Last 3-5 Years

Region	USAIDs Responding	Yes Rural Areas		Yes Urban Areas	
		#	%	#	%
Europe & NIS	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>1.00</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>1.00</u>
Asia	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1.00</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1.00</u>
LAC	<u>9</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>0.78</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>0.89</u>
Middle East	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1.00</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1.00</u>
W. Africa	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0.80</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>1.00</u>
East & So. Africa	<u>7</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0.57</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>1.00</u>
Total	<u>31</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>0.81</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>0.97</u>

The Media

The media in the countries involved are relatively unrestricted, with some exceptions, even though in many cases the broadcast media are state-operated (see Table 2). Controlled media were reported in four countries;³ and their independence is in doubt in two others.⁴ Media freedom was considered most restricted in the ex-Soviet and Mahgreb countries. In terms of the effectiveness of the media, Missions rated those in East and Southern Africa as relatively high (six "satisfactory" and only one "poor"), in contrast to the West African ratio of one satisfactory to four poor (see Table 3). Latin America showed the greatest variation of responses (two "very satisfactory," two "poor," and one "satisfactory"), while the Middle East and the ex-Communist countries received the poorest ratings with only one "satisfactory" rating (the Czech Republic).

³Russia, Peru, Egypt, and the Gambia (where a military coup took place in July).

⁴Tunisia and Morocco.

TABLE 2: Free and Independent Media

Region	Yes	No	Other
Europe & NIS	3	1	--
Asia	3	--	--
LAC	10	1	--
Middle East	0	1	2 *
W. Africa	4	1	--
East & So. Africa	7	--	--
Total	27	4	2

* USAID Morocco indicated the media has some independence with a long way to go. The Tunis Mission's response referred to a classified document.

TABLE 3: Effectiveness of Free and Independent Media

Region	Very Satisfactory	Satisfactory	No Opinion	Poor	No Response
Europe & NIS	--	1	--	2	1
Asia	--	--	1	2	--
LAC	3	4	1	3	--
Middle East	--	--	1	--	**
W. Africa	--	1	--	4	--
East & So. Africa	--	6	--	1	--
Total	3	12	3	12	2

** The Moroccan Mission did not respond; the Tunis Mission referred to a classified document.

Local Business and Professional Associations

Nearly all the Missions polled noted that local business and professional associations had supported economic policy reforms in their countries (see Table 4).⁵ However the effectiveness of such support varied considerably (see Table 5). It was considered most successful in Latin America, where six of eleven respondents rated the support satisfactory or better. The poorest

⁵The only exceptions were Mali and Tunisi. Mozambique noted that much more involvement was needed.

ratings were found in the ex-Communist and African countries, where seven of the eleven Missions considered business support to be poor.

TABLE 4: Involvement of Bus. & Prof'l Associations in Economic Reform/Policy

Region	Yes	No	No Response
Europe & NIS	4	--	--
Asia	3	--	--
LAC	10	--	1
Middle East	2	--	*
W. Africa	4 **	--	1
East & So. Africa	7 ***	--	--
Total	30	--	3

* The Tunis Mission referred to a classified document.

** The Mali Mission's response was "somewhat."

*** The Mozambique Mission indicated that "significantly more involvement is needed."

TABLE 5: Success of Bus. & Prof'l Associations in Economic Reform/Policy

Region	Very Satisfactory	Satisfactory	No Opinion	Poor	No Response
Europe & NIS	--	1	--	2	1
Asia	--	2	1	--	--
LAC	1	5	4	--	1
Middle East	--	2	--	--	*
W. Africa	1	1	1	2	--
East & So. Africa	--	2	1	4	--
Total	2	13	7	8	2

* The Tunis Mission referred to a classified document.

Regulatory/Legal Environment

Responses to the survey indicated considerable diversity with respect to the extent to which government regulations, laws, or fiscal practices inhibited the registration and operations of NGOs, professional organizations, and trade unions (see Table 6). The regimes of Asia and West Africa were considered to be the most benign in this respect.⁶ Conversely, the ex-Communist and Middle East countries were judged to be the most confining. The absence of legal status for NGOs, unfavorable donation and tax laws, and registration difficulties were reported in Russia, the Ukraine, and the Czech Republic. And restrictions on fundraising and project initiation hamper NGO activities in Egypt; those in Tunis face other difficulties. The pattern was most uneven for the Latin American countries with six Missions reporting the absence of restrictions and five their prevalence. Inefficiency and prolonged delays in registration procedures were considered problems in Colombia and El Salvador, while an adverse fiscal environment was said to hinder voluntary associations in Uruguay, Brazil, and the Dominican Republic.

TABLE 6: Current Legal, Fiscal, or Regulatory Environment Interference in Formal Registration and Operation of Civil Society Organizations

Region	Yes	No	No Response
Europe & NIS	3	1	--
Asia	--	3	--
LAC	5	6	--
Middle East	2	1	--
W. Africa	1	4	--
East & So. Africa	3	3	1
Total	14	18	1

Types and Roles of Organizations Surveyed

Missions were requested to select from a list of 15 categories of organizations (see Table 7) those that *they considered*⁷ were playing a role in the promotion or consolidation of local systems of democratic governance with direct or indirect Mission funding. Among the 33 Missions polled, the most frequently designated organizations were development NGOs (designated 26 times), women's groups (24), professional associations (23), and human rights groups (22). A middle grouping (with scores ranging from 11 to 16) included trade/labor unions, cooperatives, membership organizations, political parties, and youth groups.

⁶ Of the eight Missions queried, only the Gambia reported restrictions.

⁷ Findings reflect Mission staff opinions and are not necessarily the result of a rigorous survey.

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TABLE 7: Types of Mission-funded (directly or indirectly) Organizations Promoting or Consolidating DG Systems

Org. Types	ENI	Asia	LAC	Mid. East	West Africa	East So. Africa	Total
Trade/Labor Unions	3	3	5	1	--	--	12
Religious Orgs.	2	1	4	--	--	2	9
Prof'l Assocs.	4	3	7	2	3	4	23
Coops	3	1	2	3	2	2	13
Credit Unions	1	1	1	--	2	--	5
Farm Assocs.	1	2	1	2	1	1	8
Member Orgs.	4	2	4	2	1	3	16
Political Parties	3	1	2	2	2	4	14
Human Rights	4	3	6	1	2	6	22
Student Orgs.	2	1	4	--	--	2	9
Ethnic Assocs.	2	2	1	--	--	2	7
Regional Assocs.	1	1	4	1	--	2	9
Women's Groups	2	3	8	3	4	4	24
Youth Groups	2	2	4	--	--	3	11
Develop. NGOs	4	3	9	2	4	4	26
Total Respondents	4	3	11	3	5	7	33

Organizations considered to be less involved in promoting democratic governance were regional associations, ethnic associations,⁸ student organizations, farmer federations,⁹ religious organizations, and trailing the list, credit unions. There were also some interesting regional differences. For example, human rights groups figured strongly in all regions except West Africa

⁸Except possibly in Asia, where two out of the three Missions polled designated their importance.

⁹Except possibly in Asia and the Middle East, where two of three Missions polled designated their importance.

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(40%) and the Middle East (33%).¹⁰ Trade unions were largely overlooked except in Asia and the ex-Communist countries.¹¹ Development NGOs, women's groups and professional associations figured large in all regions (at least 50% of respondents).

Missions were also asked what role, if any, USPVOs play within USAID's overall country plan, and similarly what role, if any, local **development** NGOs play (see Tables 8 and 9).

TABLE 8: Role of USPVOs within Mission Country Plans

Role	ENI	Asia	LAC	Middle East	West Africa	East So. Africa	Total
Service Delivery	4	3	5	3	4	6	25
Mobilize Community Orgs.	4	3	3	1	3	3	17
Membership Interests	2	2	1	--	--	--	5
Civic Interests	3	3	6	1	2	2	17
Advocacy	3	3	3	--	1	--	10
Total Respondents	4	3	11	3	5	7	33

Program Sector:

Environment and Natural Resources: Russia, Colombia, Madagascar.

Women's Participation in Development, Women's Rights, Women's Legal Development Issues: Nepal.

Democracy, Civil Rights, Civic Education, Governance, Rule of Law, Civil Society: Sri Lanka, Nepal, Argentina, REDSO/WCA.

Population and Family Planning: Russia, Brazil, Madagascar.

Emergency Relief Management: Ethiopia.

AIDS: Brazil.

Private Sector: Ukraine (trade unions), Madagascar.

¹⁰In LAC only 55% of respondents indicated their importance.

¹¹LAC and Middle East Missions reported 45 and 33 percent respectively.

TABLE 9: Role of Indigenous Development NGOs in Mission Country Plans

Role	ENI	Asia	LAC	Middle East	West Africa	East & So. Africa	Total
Service Delivery	4	3	6	3	5	3	24
Mobilize Community Orgs.	3	3	4	3	2	4	19
Membership Interests	2	2	2	1	--	2	9
Civic Interests	3	3	6	1	1	3	17
Advocacy	3	3	3	1	1	4	15
Total Respondents	4	3	11	3	5	7	33

Program Sector:

Environment and Natural Resources: Madagascar, Tunisia, Colombia, Nepal.

Women's Participation in Development, Women's Rights, Women's Legal Development Issues: Nepal, Tunisia, Tanzania, Sri Lanka.

Democracy, Civil Rights, Civic Education, Governance, Rule of Law, Civil Society: Argentina, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Colombia, Tunisia, Zambia.

Population and Family Planning: Brazil, Colombia, Madagascar.

Disabled Issues: Sri Lanka.

Emergency Relief Management: Ethiopia.

Community Participation in Municipal Development: Tunisia.

AIDS: Brazil.

Private Sector: Madagascar.

Over two thirds of USAIDs regarded both USPVOs and indigenous NGOs as playing service delivery roles.¹² The role of social mobilization with community organizations was the second

¹²In LAC, 45% of responding Missions identified USPVOs and 55% indigenous NGOs as service deliverers. Only 43% of Missions in East and So. Africa regarded indigenous development NGOs as service deliverers.

most frequently designated role for local NGOs.¹³ Another frequent designation was "civic/public interests" (17 for both NGOs and USPVOs), especially in ENI and Asia. The role of "advocacy" was also noted by a number of Missions but, understandably more so for NGOs than for USPVOs (15 and 10 designations, respectively); again, this was especially notable in ENI and Asia. "Membership interests" was the least widely designated role for both NGOs and USPVOs.

Choice of program sectors was extremely diverse for both categories of organizations, ranging from trade union topics (USPVOs in the Ukraine) to private sector development (NGOs in Madagascar). Environmental and natural resource issues occupy the attention of USPVOs and NGOs in Russia, Colombia, Madagascar, Tunis, and Nepal, while topics dealing with population, family planning, women in development, women's rights, and legal issues occupy comparable groups in Nepal, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, Tanzania, Brazil, and Madagascar. Missions noted that USPVOs or NGOs were working on issues dealing with governance, civil society, rule of law, elections, democracy, and municipal rule in Argentina, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Tunisia, Zambia, and Colombia.

NGO Capabilities and Characteristics

Responding Missions were asked to rate ("good," "fair," or "poor") the capabilities, skills, and resources of NGOs and other civil society actors in their countries (see Table 10).

TABLE 10: Institutional Capacity, and Skills and Resources of Civil Society Actors*

Region	Institutional Capacity (average score by region)	Skills and resources (average score by region)
Europe & NIS	1.3	1.2
Asia	1.0	1.5
LAC	2.2	2.1
Middle East	1.0	1.1
W. Africa	1.4	1.5
East & So. Africa	1.7	1.5
Total Average	1.4	1.5

* Scale:
 Good = 3
 Fair = 2
 Poor = 1

In general, local civic organizations received rather low ratings by responding Missions. If one assigns numerical values to the ratings (i.e., 3 for "good," 2 for "fair," and 1 for "poor"), the

¹³Only 36% and 40% of responding Missions in LAC and West Africa respectively reported this finding.

overall average rating of the institutional capability of local NGOs was only 1.4 or closer to "poor" than "fair," while NGO skills and resources was rated midway at 1.5. Nevertheless, there were interesting regional differences. In the forefront were the ratings of NGOs in the LAC countries which scored an institutional capacity average of 2.2 (with Colombia, Chile, and Argentina leading the way at 3 each). The East/Southern Africa region was next highest with an institutional capacity rating at 1.7. The ex-Communist and West Africa countries followed with ratings at 1.3 and 1.4 each, while Asia and the Middle East NGOs were rated lowest in institutional capacity, both at 1.0. In general, NGOs received better ratings for their ability to include women, the poor, and marginalized groups than for their institutional capability, or technical and management skills, although the LAC Missions gave NGOs "fair" grades in both groups of attributes.

USAID Programs and Plans with NGOs

Missions were also queried as to whether they were financing, or had recently financed, a project involving USPVOs or NGOs (see Table 11). Those that replied in the affirmative were also asked whether it occupied one or more of the following sectors: health, enterprise/economic growth, democracy/governance, or environment (see Table 12). Of the 31 Missions that replied, 19 of them were affirmative. Sector selections were quite even among health (13), enterprise/economic growth (12), and democracy/governance (12), with environment being the choice of eight USAIDs. All of the umbrella projects in ENI, Asia, and the Middle East entailed health issues. In Asia and the Middle East, they also incorporated enterprise/economic growth. In Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East all the umbrella or co-finance projects were considered within the realm of democratic governance.

TABLE 11: Incidence of USPVO/NGO Co-Finance or Umbrella Projects

Region	Yes	No	No Response	Total Respondents
Europe & NIS	3	1	--	4
Asia	3	--	--	3
LAC	5	5	1	11
Middle East	2	1	--	3
W. Africa	3	1	1	5
East & So. Africa	3	4	--	7
Total	19	12	2	33

TABLE 12: Sector Emphasis of Co-Finance and Umbrella Projects

Region	Health	Enterprise/ Econ. Growth	Democratic Governance	Environment	Total Respondents
Europe & NIS	3	1	1	1	4
Asia	3	3	3	1	3
LAC	2	4	5	2	11
Middle East	2	2	2	2	3
W. Africa	1	1	--	1	5
East & So. Africa	2*	1	1	1	7
Total	13	12	12	8	33

* Includes emergency relief and rehabilitation.

To get a sense of the direction USAIDs envisage for future civil society activities and resulting demand for services, Missions were asked to indicate which among ten categories of DG activities they expected to pursue in FY '95 (see Table 13). All 33 Missions responded to this item on the survey. The sector of greatest interest was local capacity building among local level or grassroots organizations with 26 responses.¹⁴ The two next most popular were those of working with business or professional organizations¹⁵ and with women's organizations,¹⁶ including strengthening leadership and political participation (23 each). The following types of activities were favored by 19-20 of the Missions: 1) strengthening business and professional organizations, 2) civic education (100% in Asia), 3) building policy formulation, analysis and advocacy skills (100% in ENI and Asia), and 4) support for human rights monitoring, advocacy and information (100% in ENI, Asia, and East and Southern Africa). Of least interest (but still reported by nearly half of the responding Missions) were trade union support (100% in Asia, 75% in ENI) and support for the independent media (100% in ENI and Asia).

Missions expressed interest in several other fields as well. For example, both the Santo Domingo and the West African regional Missions indicated interest in electoral reform or electoral assistance (with the former also mentioning rule of law work). The Peru Mission mentioned legal

¹⁴In fact, in every region 60% or more of the responding Missions noted this interests, with 100% respondents from ENI, Asia, and the Middle East.

¹⁵With 100% respondents in ENI, Asia, and the Middle East.

¹⁶With 100% respondents in Asia and the Middle East, and 80% and 86% in West Africa and East and Southern Africa respectively.

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defense for human rights activities, while the Egyptian Mission considers support for consumer interests a priority. The El Salvador USAID agreed that building policy skills was important but stressed that emphasis should be placed at the grassroots level. Finally, the Tanzania Mission felt that more should be done on decentralization including research, training of traditional and local authorities and training on the problems of administering decentralized programs.

TABLE 13: Anticipated Elements of Country Programs for FY 95

Activity/Element	ENI	Asia	LAC	Middle East	West Africa	East & So. Africa	Total
Local dev. NGO (Coops, credit unions...)	4	3	4	3	4	5	23
Bus. & Prof'l Assoc. Support	4	3	5	3	1	4	20
Trade Union Support	3	3	3	2	1	2	14
Local Level Grassroots Orgs. Capacity Building	4	3	8	3	3	5	26
Women's Org. Support	3	3	4	3	4	6	23
Civic Education	3	3	4	1	3	5	19
Building Policy, Analysis & Advocacy Skills	4	3	6	1	1	4	19
Support for Independent Media	4	3	2	--	2	5	16
Human Rights Support, Monitoring, Advocacy	4	3	4	--	1	7	19
Total Respondents	4	3	11	3	5	7	33

Other priorities:

Legal defense of human rights (Peru); electoral reforms and rule of law (Dominican Republic); Strengthening policy formulation at the grassroots (El Salvador); popular participation in municipal government (Bolivia); crisis prevention and management (Gambia); electoral processes assistance (REDSO/W. Africa); civic associations, research, and training on local and traditional government, and training on problems of administration of decentralization programs (Tanzania).

In all, the survey demonstrates a broad range of interest by responding USAIDs in civil society matters, particularly in working with local grassroots bodies, women's groups, and business/professional organizations. The ENI, Asia, and Middle East regions seem to be most interested in such work, with 100% respondents in several categories.

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PART II:
REVIEW OF UMBRELLA PROJECTS

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ABBREVIATIONS

BEES	Black Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Support Facility, South African, PACT
BINGO	Benin Indigenous NGO Strengthening Project, Africare
CCOP	Cambodia Community Outreach Project, PACT
CED	Community and Enterprise Development, Senegal, New Transcency Foundation
CONGAD	A consortium of NGOs working with the New Transcency Foundation in the Senegal PVO/NGO umbrella project
CORDEP	Cochabamba Regional Development Project, Bolivia, Planning Assistance
DAI	Development Alternatives, Inc.
DG	Democratic Governance
FFP	Food for Work (see the CORDEP project under Planning Assistance)
G/DG	Global Center for Democracy
K-Rep	Kenyan umbrella project with World Education
LIFE	Living in a Finite Environment, Namibia, World Learning
MDS	Management Development Services, umbrella program supporting USPVOs under New Transcency Foundation
NCNW	National Council of Negro Women, Inc.
NGOSSP	Non-Governmental Sector Support Program, Russia, Save the Children and ORT International Cooperation
NIS	New Independent States
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations (typically refers to those in developing countries)
NRMS	Natural Resources Management Support, Africa, World Learning
PACA	Projecto Ambientar de Centreal America, Central America, CARE
PACT	Private Agencies Cooperating Together
PRIP	Private Rural Initiatives Project, Bangladesh, PACT
PRODERPAS	Project to Strengthen NGOs for Peace and Development, El Salvador, PACT
PTAs	Parent-Teacher Associations (see World Education)
READ	Reaching out with Education to Adults in Development, Namibia, World Education
SALN	South African Leadership Network, PACT
SAVEM	Sustainable Approaches to Viable Environmental Management, Malagasy umbrella project under PACT
SHARED	Services in Health, Agriculture, and Rural Enterprise Development, Malawian umbrella project under World Learning
SPIRITED	Strengthening NGO Institutions and Rebuilding Coalitions: An Environmental and Self-Sustaining Approach, Thai umbrella project under PACT
STEP	Strengthening Technical Environmental-Economic Proficiency, Indonesian umbrella project under PACT
SWAY	Support Women's Associations of Yemen, World Education
USPVOs	US Private Voluntary Organizations

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INTRODUCTION

As part of the civil society component of G/DG's larger design effort, Thunder & Associates, Inc. was requested to undertake a review and assessment of USPVOs with experience in the management of USAID-financed "umbrella" projects. The purpose of this exercise was to determine both the number of USPVOs with experience in umbrella project management and their capacity to undertake the provision of technical assistance, training, and grants management -- functions normally associated with this management instrument. This was particularly important as G/DG was seriously considering the extensive use of umbrella projects as the "mechanism" of choice in the management of the civil society component of the new DG program, as well as in a number of the other components under design, i.e., rule of law, electoral processes, and governance.

Thunder interviewed well over a dozen USPVOs that had served as "intermediary" umbrella managers in a wide range of PVO/NCO support projects supported by USAID through both Cooperative Agreements and contracts. These USPVOs had managed umbrella projects at the global, regional, and country levels, as well as for single sectors such as natural resource management, and multiple sectors. The basic finding was that there certainly exists a sufficient number of USPVOs with the requisite experience and capacity to manage umbrella projects and to provide a minimum level of competition for the award of G/DG program components emanating from the design process.

What follows is a review of ten such umbrella/co-financing projects involving USPVOs and USAID financing. Each description is in four parts: 1) the USPVO's experience with umbrella projects, including specific project descriptions; 2) the pros and cons of that experience; 3) the areas of emphasis; and 4) the relationship of the projects to the enhancement of civil society.

I. WORLD EDUCATION

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Experience with Umbrella Projects

World Education's experience dates from May 1984 when it entered a cooperative agreement with USAID to undertake the Kenyan Rural Enterprise Program (K-REP). Since that time, it has managed several additional umbrella projects, mostly in Africa and also in Yemen.

K-Rep, Kenya, 1984-1992, cooperative agreement

This project involves training, technical assistance and subgrants to small enterprises, mostly but not exclusively in the rural areas. K-Rep (the name of the project and also that of the Kenyan NGO partnering with World Education) has become institutionalized to the point that K-Rep has taken over the management, technical assistance and credit functions under a cooperative

agreement with USAID. World Education provided advisory services to this end from 1990-1992 under a subcontract between K-Rep and World Education.

Reaching out with Education to Adults in Development (READ), Namibia, 1993-1998, cooperative agreement

READ is a non-formal education project which features technical assistance to Namibian NGOs to provide adult education services to their clients. Services include training, technical assistance and sub-grants.

Activities in Mali

World Education administers several activities in Mali that are financed under grants from the **Mali Co-Financing Project**.

Urban Revitalization Project, 1991-1995, grant. This project entails assisting urban community/neighborhood groups to undertake simple environmental improvements (e.g., upgrading sanitation facilities, municipal repairs, neighborhood cleanups). Local priorities are set by beneficiaries through neighborhood consultations, and local groups take responsibility for managing subgrants. Project activities supplement local employment and income.

The Development of Parent-Teacher Associations, 1993-1995, grant. This project is an outgrowth of the previous activity. Neighborhood associations consider upgrading local schools a top priority. It involves working with the local PTAs or lobbying for the election of new PTAs (since many of the pre-existing ones were non-functional or resisted changes). Community participation in school PTAs include involvement in school management, fundraising for local improvements and management of local funds.

Strengthening of Parents' Associations, Benin, 1994-1998, grant

This project is essentially a replication of the PTA activity in Mali. It places strong emphasis on parental involvement in school management.

Support to Women's Associations of Yemen (SWAY), 1991-1995, contract

While not labeled as an "umbrella project" per se, the activity in Yemen has many similar characteristics. It involves grant making and training to assist Yemeni women's organizations in learning productive skills and improving the provision of social services.

Pros and Cons of Above Experience

The most positive aspect of the experience is working with local NGOs helping them to address their specific problems and to set their own priorities. However, some USAIDs lack confidence in the integrity and/or competence of local NGOs and may expect the USPVO to play a supervisory/auditing/compliance function. This puts the USPVO in an awkward position.

Areas of Project Emphasis

Areas of project emphasis entail: rural enterprise development, non-formal education, urban revitalization, income generation for women and urban communities. Priorities of project *services* include training (which occupies most of staff's level of effort), sub-grants (which takes the lion's share of budget), information sharing (including workshops and gatherings), documentation, and publications.

Relationship to the enhancement of Civil Society

The PTA projects in Mali and Benin strengthen democratic practices at the grassroots level by promoting democratic governance practices in local schools. The urban activity enables neighborhood dwellers to have a greater voice in setting priorities for urban improvements. The urban project in Mali was also designed to generate employment for underemployed youth and reduce tensions at the time of the country's first democratic elections.

II. WORLD LEARNING

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Experience with Umbrella Projects

World Learning's experience with umbrella projects dates from 1987-1988 (then known as The Experiment in International Living), when it entered into agreements with USAID to administer umbrella projects in Somalia, Liberia and Zaire. Since then, umbrella projects have become a major component of its program portfolio.

Early Activities

The projects in the above three countries were aimed at general capacity building of local NGOs and involved subgrants, training and technical assistance. The projects in Zaire and Liberia were implemented through cooperative agreements, while the one in Somalia was a contract. In the case of Zaire, World Learning entered into a subcontract with Management Systems International to provide services in setting up financial systems and procedures for the subgrantees. The Liberia project was terminated in 1990, and the ones in Zaire and Somalia in 1991 -- all as a result of civil turmoil. In addition, World Learning implemented a PVO Umbrella/Child Survival project through a cooperative agreement in Guatemala (1989-1992) which provided technical assistance, subgrants and commodities to NGOs working in child survival and family health.

PVO/NGO Natural Resources Management Support (NRMS) Project, Africa, 1989-1995, cooperative agreement

The project focuses on strengthening the capacity of African NGOs to carry out natural resource Management activities in four countries -- Mali, Madagascar, Cameroon and Uganda. World Learning is the lead USPVO on the project with CARE and World Wildlife Fund as collaborating agencies. The project is presently entering a second phase in which will emphasize assessing the results of the first phase to determine which types of activities with NGOs are most likely to lead to improved natural resources management.

Services in Health, Agriculture and Rural Enterprise Development (SHARED), Malawi, 1990-1996, cooperative agreement

The SHARED project aims to strengthen Malawian NGOs in the foregoing fields through technical assistance, training, and subgrants. World Learning entered into subcontracts with the Overseas Education Fund (now defunct) and the Center for Development and Population Activities for specialized services in non-formal education and family planning.

AIDS Prevention and Control Project, Uganda, 1991-1996, Operational Program Grant

This project focuses on assisting medical and public health NGOs in AIDS prevention and control, through subgrants, non-formal education, community outreach, pilot programs, etc.

Democracy Enhancement Project, Haiti, 1991-1995 (with interruption by the coup), subcontract.

World Learning serves as a subcontractor to the America's Development Foundation, emphasizing the institutional development of local NGOs as part of a broader program of democracy enhancement. The project helps human rights organizations, civil action groups, legal services agencies, and other social service bodies.

Private Voluntary Organization Initiatives for the New Independent States (PVO/NIS) Project, 1992-1996, cooperative agreement.

The project assists local NGOs in a broad range of fields including health, management, institutional development, women's affairs, childhood protection, and relief services, as well as education in democratic practices and civil society development. Sub-grants, ranging from \$150,000 - \$750,000, are usually made to USPVOs that have partnered with a local NGO(s); the proportion of assistance going to the latter varies considerably. Grantees must furnish 25% of proposal costs. Decisions on proposals are made by outside panels, not World Learning.

Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE) Project, Namibia, 1993-1998, subcontract

World Learning is a subcontractor to the World Wildlife Fund for which it is providing training and technical assistance to Namibian environmental NGO grantees to improve their budgeting and financial management capabilities.

PVO Support Project and Democracy Initiatives and Governance Project, Rwanda, 1993-1994, cooperative agreements

Ethnic strife ended these two projects. The first project concerned small enterprise development. The second had two private and two public components. The public component of the governance project involved technical services to the National Assembly and the Ministry of the Interior on local governance issues. The private components involved efforts: 1) to create a consortium of local NGOs on civil society matters, and 2) to help create an indigenous NGO that would provide services and further professionalize the work of local journalists.

Pros and Cons of Above Experience

Experience with USAID has generally been quite good. Of major concern is the extent and detail to which the local USAID exercises its "substantial involvement" function. There is a lack of clarity on the matter and it a very personality-dependent issue which varies from USAID to USAID.

Relationships with local NGOs have also been good. An improvement in relations resulted from more open and increased communication between the USPVO and local NGOs. Local NGOs had previously perceived their role to be limited to 1) providing information on their work but not receiving comparative feedback on how the program as a whole was progressing, or 2) providing information on similar projects in the country or abroad. Now NGOs feel more involved as participants in a mutual task.

Priorities of Project Services

Training and technical assistance are the most important services the USPVO can render. However, services must be complemented with financial support to enable the NGO to apply the TA. An important USPVO service is assistance to subgrantees on issues and procedures of procurement. Another important service is facilitating information and exchanges between NGOs in different countries working on similar problems.

Relationship to the Enhancement of Civil Society

As indicated in the above comments (especially those on the projects in the ex-Soviet Union, Haiti and Rwanda), World Learning is directly involved in assisting local NGOs on a broad range of issues dealing with governance, democratic practices, and support for civil society. Much of World Learning's work with NGOs addresses local governance questions, whether the subject is formerly related to civil society improvement or not.

III. NEW TRANSCENTURY FOUNDATION

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Experience with Umbrella Projects

Management Development Services (MDS) Program, USPVOs, 1976-1984

With funding from USAID's then Office of Voluntary and Private Cooperation, Transcentury carried out a \$3.2 million program of technical assistance to over 200 USPVOs, providing workshops, publications, consultations, and advisory services. The program emphasized subjects such as management principles and procedures, staffing issues, upgrading internal financial systems, project design and preparation of proposals.

Community and Enterprise Development (CED) Project, Senegal, 1988-1991

This umbrella project had two major components. In its community development component, USPVOs and local NGOs worked with village and community groups on a wide range of development activities. Its enterprise development focus involved: 1) helping local groups and rural entrepreneurs start up small enterprises, and 2) providing advisory services as these strived for profitability.

Senegal PVO/NGO Umbrella Project, 1991-1996

Under a contract with USAID, Transcentury is managing a program of assistance primarily to Senegalese NGOs, although in some cases the NGOs have partnered with USPVOs (e.g. The National Council of Negro Women and Catholic Relief Services). The project offers training, technical assistance, information sharing, and subgrants to Senegalese NGOs in a number of fields related to local development (e.g. water supply, health, literacy, environmental improvement, and promotion of women). Services also aim to strengthen NGO capabilities (e.g. financial management, project design, computer utilization).

The project operates under the aegis of a National Project Committee made up of representatives of various government ministries, USAID, Transcentury, and CONGAD, a consortium of NGOs. The operational arm of the Committee is the Umbrella Support Unit staffed by Transcentury employees which reviews the program, conducts the workshops, and transmits subgrant funding.

Pros and Cons of the Above Experience

A serious concern is the amount of time and work required for training and technical assistance to bring NGOs to the point of being able to begin project implementation. This has caused lags in initiating operations and a build-up in the funding pipeline. An additional concern in working with USAID is the need to reorient project activities when the Mission's country strategy changes. On the other hand, USAID offers the possibility of multi-year funding and the availability of the Mission's technical expertise. Transcentury does not find that having a contractual relationship with USAID has caused problems for implementation or relationships with other parties.

Areas of Project Emphasis

Areas of project emphasis include: agriculture, maternal and child health, credit, and natural resources management. Literacy and numeracy training is integrated into all subproject activities.

Relationship to the Enhancement of Civil Society

The key objective of the project is the enhancement of the capability of local groups to determine priorities and manage their own affairs. Another objective is to increase the empowerment of women in local decision-making and financial control. Progress in these matters helps people to become more directly involved in the structure and management of their society and environment. It is also crucial to project sustainability; that is, the project aims to develop NGOs and village management committees with increased ability to continue and extend their development activities.

IV. PLANNING ASSISTANCE

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Experience with Umbrella Projects

Cochabamba Regional Development Project (CORDEP), Bolivia, 1989-1997, Cooperative Agreement

The project is implemented by Planning Assistance and DAI (under a contract). Its purpose is to reduce coca production by helping farmers produce alternative cash crops. The methodology is to assist local and international NGOs and local producer associations, who then provide technical assistance to producers aimed at helping them grow and market alternative crops and increase farm income. Planning Assistance provides training, technical assistance, and project monitoring, while DAI handles the lending program. Seven million dollars was loaned to NGOs in 1992 for on-lending to farmers. Average household income of borrowers increased by a reported 105%.

As an adjunct to the project, a component on municipal development was begun in 1989 on a pilot basis utilizing Food for Work (FFW) commodities. The purpose is to increase the participation of poor (and often unemployed) urban residents and neighborhood groups 1) to improve municipal facilities and services, and 2) to give them a voice in priority setting. FFW is used as a means of financing wages. The project has since broadened to provide technical assistance on other urban issues such as municipal finances and budget preparation.

Fondacion Vida, Honduras, 1994-1998, Contract

The project aims at assisting Fondacion Vida, a Honduran foundation set up by the Honduran government, to assist Honduran NGOs to carry out environmental activities. Planning Assistance is advising on objectives setting, planning, and proposal preparation procedures. The aim is to enable Fondacion Vida to play a role equivalent to Planning Assistance's in Bolivia (see above).

Municipal Initiatives, Haiti, 1993-1997, Cooperative Agreement

The project is similar in objectives and procedures to the municipal development activity in Bolivia.

Pros and Cons of Above Experience

Interaction with USAID has by in large been positive, with occasional but not serious differences. An area of tension, however, is USAID's emphasis on showing rapid and measurable quantitative and qualitative results (e.g. crop yields and outputs, changes in the NGO community, etc.). Relations with NGOs have been mixed. Some have backed out of the project because they felt that its monitoring requirements were too burdensome, or that compliance with financial accountability was too rigorous. On the other hand, other NGOs appreciate the discipline that such requirements entailed. These views are also reflected in a recent project evaluation by Chemonix.

Areas of Project Emphasis

Areas of project emphasis include agriculture, municipal development, and environmental protection.

Relationship to the Enhancement of Civil Society

The Bolivia and Haitian activities are furthering the empowerment of poor municipal residents to set local priorities and improve their environment. All projects aim at increasing the self reliance and vitality of the voluntary sector in the countries involved.

V. SAVE THE CHILDREN

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Experience with Umbrella Projects

Save the Children Federation, Inc., is the US branch of the International Save the Children Alliance which was started in Great Britain in 1919. Today the Alliance consists of 25 branches and operates in over 100 countries. It is one of the largest consortia of NGOs working in fields related to child assistance, including emergency assistance, health, education, street children, etc. In recent years, the US Save the Children has entered into a number of umbrella projects with local NGOs. Also, its emphasis on children and family related programs has broadened to include support to NGOs in general as part of the effort to strengthen civil society (see below).

The Non-Governmental Sector Support Program (NGOSSP), Russia, 1994-1997, Cooperative Agreement

The aim of this large (\$30 million) project is to enhance a strong and vibrant Russian civil society by helping Russian NGOs fill part of the void left by the collapse of Communism. It is a daunting task due to the widespread distrust with and within the NGO sector, and because of the lack of communications among fledgling NGOs. Specific objectives include 1) the development of a supportive legal environment, 2) public education campaigns on the function and importance of NGOs, 3) institutional strengthening of NGOs through training and organizational guidance, 4) facilitating information sharing and coalition building among NGOs through regional information centers, and 5) financial support based on NGO project proposal competitions.

The project is being implemented by a consortium of PVOs, led by Save the Children, which includes: The Center for Democracy, Counterpart Foundation, Education Development Center, and Johns Hopkins University/Institute for Policy Studies. Of interest is the role of the Center for Democracy which works with government officials, legal experts, and practicing lawyers on legal and regulatory questions bearing on the status of NGOs.

Emergency and Humanitarian Assistance PVO Program in the Caucasus (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan), 1993-1995, Cooperative Agreement

With current funding approaching \$50 million, the project is intended to address emergency and humanitarian needs in the three Caucasus republics. The objective is to strengthen the capacity of US and indigenous NGOs -- through training, technical assistance and subgrants -- to provide and manage emergency and humanitarian aid. Early in the program emphasis was placed on meeting the immediate needs of displaced persons (food, fuel, clothing, blankets). As crisis and emergency needs abate, programs are beginning to shift to more development-oriented activities.

Institutional Development Grant, West Bank/Gaza, 1994-1997, Cooperative Agreement

This project aims to enhance the internal institutional capabilities of local West Bank/Gaza organizations through technical assistance in administration, financial management, and planning

functions. The project seeks to work with a range of local entities including community groups, local NGOs and regional/national NGOs. It makes two types of subgrant funding available: 1) sectoral funding for supporting technical work (e.g. agriculture), and 2) block grants for strengthening internal management and institutional capacity.

Family Planning/AIDS Prevention Project, Mali, 1993-1999, Operational Program Grant

The project promotes family planning and AIDS prevention through collaboration with local NGOs. It assists these NGOs (through technical assistance, training and subgrants) with the preparation and dissemination of social marketing messages related to the distribution of contraceptives, and helps expand the distribution.

Joint Efforts for the Improvement of the Situation of Disadvantaged Children in Olangapo, Philippines, 1993-1998, Cooperative Agreement

The project assists NGOs to respond to the social and economic needs of disadvantaged children, women and their families in basic education, health, and livelihood. Technical assistance, training and subgrants are provided.

Pros and Cons of Above Experience

NGOs tend to prefer dealing with a USPVO rather than directly with a donor. There is an informality and a body of shared experience which facilitates frank and open communications. Experience with USAID is varied and differs from Mission to Mission; it is very personality specific. The USAID in Russia, for example, has been very supportive. Others tend to micromanage their USPVO projects. In those cases, the USPVO has to walk a fine line between the demands of USAID and the wishes of the NGOs. There have been improvements in USAID/PVO relationships, and a truer partnership between the two seems to be evolving. With respect to the issue of "substantial involvement," it is important to spell out the specifics of what is expected or required early on. Relations with NGOs are also varied. Here, again, the important consideration is to involve the NGOs in the activity early on so that they acquire a sense of ownership.

Areas of Project Emphasis

Major technical fields include family planning, AIDS prevention, child protection, clarifying or seeking to modify the legal or regulatory environment as it applies to NGOs, social marketing (the use of media to provide positive, project related messages), training, institutional development, seed grants, emergency response activities (e.g. provision of food, medicines, blankets), and assisting local enterprises to manufacture emergency items.

Relationship to the Enhancement of Civil Society

Project activities in Russia and the Caucasus enhance democratic governance by meeting immediate human needs, and improving living conditions, thereby reducing tendencies to resort to extremism or to foster nostalgia for the old regime. Russian society is conducive to working with NGOs, which offer an opportunity for groups to shape their own futures.

VI. AFRICARE

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Experience with Umbrella Projects

Africare began operations in the 1970's to support developmental NGOs in Africa. Its present project portfolio includes several umbrella projects.

Benin Indigenous NGO Strengthening Project (BINGO), 1994-1997, Operational Program Grant

The project aims at capacity building of Benin's NGOs with particular emphasis on enabling them to participate in activities that will strengthen democratic practices in the wake of the country's recent democratic elections. Approximately 20 NGOs are being assisted with training and subgrants.

NGO Assessment Project, Guinea, 1994-1995, Operational Program Grant

This is not an umbrella project but is of interest because it, like the Benin project, involves an attempt to follow up on the benefits of the country's successful democratic elections. The project involves a one year study of the nascent NGO community in Guinea. The results of the study will be used to plan a long term program for increasing the institutional capacity of local NGOs.

Small Enterprise Development Program, Mali, 1992-1999, Cooperative Agreement

This is another NGO support activity financed by USAID Mali's **Mali Co-Financing Project** (see references from section on World Learning). The project provides technical assistance, training, institutional support, and subgrant financing to local NGOs in community health, natural resources management, and small enterprise development. Africare partners with a specific local NGO in implementing each technical component of the project.

Governance in the New South Africa Project, 1994-1996, Contract

While not an umbrella project, the project's subject matter is of interest because it is directed to newly elected members of the South African Parliament and seeks to increase their knowledge and understanding of public issues and democratic practices through contact with legislators and officials of other democracies, particularly the United States.

Techniques for doing this include visits and study tours by South African parliamentarians, the sending of experts on public issues to South Africa, and the convening of seminars in the US, South Africa, and third countries. Activities are largely based on requests from Parliamentary authorities. The program is being extended to include provincial leaders.

Nigeria AIDS Control and Prevention, 1992-1997, Cooperative Agreement

The project is managed by a contractor (Family Health International/AIDSCAP), with Africare running a PVO/NGO component of the project under a cooperative agreement with the

contractor. The purpose is to enlist Nigerian NGOs in support of AIDS prevention and control activities in Nigeria. Under the project, Africare is strengthening Nigerian NGO capability to design, manage, implement, evaluate, and raise funds in support of AIDS prevention. Services provided by Africare include technical assistance, training, and seed grants for implementation.

Pros and Cons of Above Experience

The experience of working with USAID is improving because there is more opportunity to participate in the planning and design of project activities. This is critical to USAID/NGO collaboration. There has also been an improvement in the latitude Africare has to implement the activity once agreement has been reached on its aims and methods. A negative factor of working with USAID has been delays in funding or activity start up which throws off the NGO's planning schedule.

Africare's experience in working with local NGOs has generally been positive. Africare finds that the transfer of skills to local NGOs is less difficult with respect to technical matters than with respect to those in organization and management, e.g. planning, financial management, proposal preparation, personnel, etc.

Areas of Project Emphasis

Areas of project emphasis include: the enhancement of civil society and pluralism, AIDS prevention and control, community health, natural resources management, and small enterprise development.

Relationship to the Enhancement of Civil Society

See the Benin, Guinea, and South Africa projects described above.

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VII. ORT INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

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Experience with Umbrella Projects

ORT is an international PVO, headquartered in London that specializes in a broad range of training programs. Its experience with USAID goes back to 1960. ORT's experience with umbrella projects reflects, in part, the evolution of USAID's approach to development from mainly technical/economic subjects to societal ones.

USAID/Zaire PVO Support Project, 1983-1988, Cooperative Agreement

The Zaire project represents the first time USAID and a USPVO collaborated in a project structure where the latter served as an intermediary (i.e. "umbrella") between USAID and indigenous private voluntary organizations. The aim of the project was to strengthen the capability of Zairian NGOs to implement rural development activities in health, rural development, and energy. Under the project, ORT set up a central umbrella fund which financed sub-project activities in the foregoing areas, specifically rural health clinics, road construction/rehabilitation, and a mini-hydro plant. ORT provided training and technical assistance to local NGOs in organization and management, maintenance, project design, and implementation.

Democracy Network Albania Program, 1995-1998, Cooperative Agreement

This project is due to start in early 1995. Its purpose is to develop and strengthen Albanian civil society, particularly with respect to public policy. Specifically, it aims to strengthen the capacity of Albanian NGOs to undertake policy advocacy thereby promoting democratic governance and a stronger civil society. The means of accomplishment will be through training, technical assistance, and small grants to Albanian public policy NGOs.

Non-Governmental Organization Sector Support Program (NGOSSP), Russia, 1994-1997, Cooperative Agreement

In this activity ORT is serving as an implementing agency for a member of the consortium of PVOs which is carrying out the NGOSSP program in Russia (see Save the Children project description). Working with the Counterpart Foundation, ORT will help carry out an assessment of the training needs of Russian NGOs. ORT will give particular attention to training related to computers and computer applications. The assessment will be followed by a major training program targeted to the priorities identified in the assessment.

Pros and Cons of the Above Experience

The Zaire umbrella project was one of the first to be designed and implemented. As such, it provided an example and learning experience, not only for ORT but especially for USAID. The growth and multiplication of USAID-financed USPVO/NGO umbrella projects can be traced in

part to ORT's and USAID's positive experience with the Zaire project. ORT has generally had a positive experience working with USAID.

Areas of Project Emphasis

Historically, emphasis has been on rural health services, transportation (civil works construction), and hydro power generation and distribution. Emphasis is now turning to strengthening the public advocacy roles and technical competence of local NGOs.

Relationship to Enhancement of Civil Society

By empowering and strengthening local NGOs, ORT is contributing to a more pluralistic and less directive social order. By providing material and financial assistance, ORT is helping some of these agencies to survive and continue functioning. It is also helping them to strengthen themselves internally, to make plans and to make strategic choices. As they grow in their capacity to deliver services, they also grow in their ability to make a social impact. A recent example in Albania was a protest by women's groups to pressure the government on trash collection.

VIII. PACT (PRIVATE AGENCIES COOPERATING TOGETHER)

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Experience with Umbrella Projects

PACT began in 1971 as an intermediary between USAID and a number of US PVOs, receiving support from the Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation of USAID. With the phase out of such support, PACT realigned itself in 1992 to become an operational USPVO competing with similar organizations for project funding (mostly from USAID), including umbrella projects with NGOs. It is currently operating 20 projects in twelve countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America with an annual budget of \$20 million and a staff of 150.

Cambodia Community Outreach Project (CCOP), 1991-1997

The project is being implemented through a cooperative agreement supplemented by a subcontract between PACT and the John Snow organization. Implementation in the field is effected through subagreements between PACT and nine USPVOs most of which were originally organized to help and resettle Cambodian refugees. The USPVOs, in turn, are working through and with the assistance of 30 Cambodian NGOs. The project initially emphasized humanitarian assistance to benefit women, disabled victims of war, and other vulnerable groups. More recently it has provided financial and technical assistance to Cambodian NGOs to further their activities in human rights, AIDS prevention, and other public affairs activities including NGO input into the drafting of a new constitution. Financing from the National Endowment for Democracy also supports some of PACT's activities in the above mentioned fields.

Sustainable Approaches to Viable Environmental Management (SAVEM), Madagascar, 1991-1997

The project is one of USAID's major environmental activities in Madagascar. PACT manages its \$21 million grant fund and provides technical assistance to the country's primary environmental NGOs. The fund finances collaborative activities between local NGOs and international environmental groups, as well as providing small grants to strengthen the administrative and organizational capabilities of local NGOs. PACT has also begun making small environmental grants to village associations where no local NGOs are functioning.

South African Leadership Network (SALN), 1991-1996, Cooperative Agreement.

Through this project PACT is providing institutional assistance to South African NGOs in such management fields as financial procedures, strategic planning and conflict resolution and in such technical fields as housing, human rights, health, literacy and small business development. Training is also provided through work/study visits.

Black Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Support Facility (BEES), South Africa, 1993-1996, Cooperative Agreement

BEES, managed by PACT, provides technical and financial assistance to South African agencies that are supporting the creation and sustainability of small and micro enterprises.

Private Rural Initiatives Project (PRIP), Bangladesh, 1988-1998, Cooperative Agreement

Under the PRIP project, PACT is providing technical and management services to the Bangladesh NGO community by 1) helping to set up a NGO network for offering training and program management services, 2) providing technical assistance to the coordinating body of Bangladeshi development NGOs (ADAB), 3) devising and replicating technologies for small kitchen gardens, and 4) designing activities (in cooperation with CARE) to facilitate income generating possibilities for women, including methods for preparing simple feasibility studies and training materials. In its two final years responsibility for the project will be taken over by a Bangladeshi PRIP with technical assistance from PACT.

Strengthening Technical Environmental-Economic Proficiency (STEP), Indonesia, 1993-1995, Cooperative Agreement

The project provides technical assistance and program funding to three consortia of NGOs in Sumatra to assist communities to implement sustainable environmental projects.

Strengthening NGO Activity to Promote Democratic Pluralism, Nepal, 1993-1996, Cooperative Agreement

The project aims to strengthen Nepalese NGOs through training and technical assistance in organization and management, project identification, literacy training, budget preparation, reporting and evaluation. Micro grants are made to enable NGOs to put newly acquired skills into practice. The project has helped community groups to start revolving loan funds for agriculture, livestock and micro-enterprises.

Strengthening NGO Institutions and Rebuilding Coalitions: An Environmental and Self Sustaining Approach (SPIRITED), Thailand, 1990-1994, Cooperative Agreement

The aim of this completed project was to encourage citizen participation in the decision making process at local, regional and national levels, particularly on issues relating to jobs and the environment. Activities included: 1) dialogue with government officials on community forestry and forestry planning, 2) improving environmental and regulatory conditions of fisheries through government action and self-help measures, 3) stimulating the formation of volunteer environmental protection groups on various aspects of environmental law, and 4) initiating used paper collection efforts to promote public awareness and generate NGO income.

Project to Strengthen NGOs for Peace and Development (PRODERPAS), El Salvador, 1992-1994, Host Country Contract

Funded by the Salvador Secretariat of National Reconstruction, the project provided technical assistance and training in support of local NGOs including: 1) facilitation of NGO exchanges between a united Salvador delegation and NGOs of neighboring countries, 2) identifying impact indicators and preparing a monitoring system for selected NGOs, and 3) Converting PRODERPAS from an international PVO to a Salvadorian NGO.

PVO Support Project, Peru, 1992-1998, Cooperative Agreement

The project aims to assist Peruvian NGOs with technical assistance and subgrants in the fields of microenterprise, agriculture, and health, especially among the poorest elements of the population. An additional goal is to build and strengthen eight regional NGO consortia and to link NGOs with appropriate donors.

Pros and Cons of the Above Experience

After 24 years as an intermediary, PACT feels that it has an excellent relationship with USAID. It attributes this in part to having worked out a modus vivendi of collaboration. It stresses the importance of having a major role in the design of the projects it is asked to administer and not just be a "hired gun." It dismisses as nonsensical the view that USPVOs that accept funds from USAID are thereby "contaminated;" so long as they maintain their individuality and participate in project design they can play a distinctive and valuable role. The process could be further improved if USPVOs and their NGO counterparts had a greater opportunity to participate in USAID country strategy planning. PACT suggests that while many NGOs have very specialized and narrow points of view, many do not, and could substantially contribute to the planning process.

Areas of Project Emphasis

Much emphasis is given to child welfare, health, small enterprise development, agriculture, and environmental protection. The overall objective of each project is to strengthen civil society and civil institutions in the project country, to empower local groups, and to enable such groups to continue to pursue their activities after the donor and PACT are gone.

Relationship to Enhancement of Civil Society

PACT believes that increasing the capacity of local groups to tackle their problems will lead to a more pluralistic society and will contribute to the enhancement of democratic values and behavior. In addition, a number of PACT-assisted projects (e.g., Cambodian Community Outreach, Strengthening NGO Activity to Promote Democratic Pluralism (Nepal)) focus directly on furthering democratic practices.

IX. CARE USA

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Experience with Umbrella Projects

CARE, one of the largest private non-profit foreign relief and emergency assistance organizations in the world, has largely made its name and reputation as an efficient program implementation agency with strong logistic and management capabilities. Its experience with umbrella projects is relatively new.

In undertaking relief and emergency programs, CARE often functions as the implementing agency, carrying out the program as an agent of the local host country entity or of the donor. For example, in Somalia CARE set up the Emergency Logistic Unit under the auspices of the National Refugee Committee, to handle the distribution of food and other commodities for Somali refugees.

However, CARE is increasingly entering into arrangements with a local "partner" to share the administrative and operational burden of program implementation. According to an internal survey, 65% of all CARE projects are now "partnership projects." Partner organizations are most frequently government agencies (ministries, regional authorities, and municipal governments), but they can also include community based organizations, local NGOs, international PVOs, and research organizations or universities.

Accordingly, partnership arrangements vary considerably from country to country or project to project. In some cases the local entity is much like a subcontractor with little autonomy, while in others the local entity has varying degrees of latitude and reciprocity in implementation, management, and evaluation. The survey concludes: "As partnerships with NGOs increase CARE may need to become increasingly involved in issues surrounding the 'enabling environment' for voluntary and philanthropic activity, as well as the development of civil society."

CARE became involved in umbrella projects in 1989-1990. Its involvement represents a new relationship for CARE in which project implementation is measured as much in terms of institutional development as in physical outputs.

Somalia Umbrella Project, 1993-1996, Grant

The project provides subgrants to Somali NGOs for a variety of rehabilitation and development interventions in health, agriculture and employment generation. CARE provides managerial, financial, and technical training and assistance and monitors subgrant implementation.

Honduras NGO Extension Project, 1993-1997, Grant

The project includes a component of NGO participation in agricultural extension activities. CARE selects the partner organizations, and provides the funding, training, and overall supervision and

management.

Strengthening Health Institutions, Peru, 1991-1996, Cooperative Agreement

The project provides subgrants to NGOs implementing primary health care activities. CARE also provides technical assistance to strengthen institutional capacity, and training on a broad range of project management subjects.

Central American PACA (Projecto Ambientar de Central America), 1990-1995, Cooperative Agreement

Managed by CARE with assistance from The Nature Conservancy under a subagreement, the project provides assistance to nine environmental NGOs in four Central American countries to strengthen their capacity to solve local environmental problems. Training is a major element of the project.

Sustainable Resources Project, Ecuador, 1991-1998, Cooperative Agreement

The project provides funding to local NGOs and community groups to strengthen their environmental capabilities. Management is by a consortium made up of CARE, the Nature Conservancy, and the Wildlife Conservation Society.

Sustainable Impact Project 1990-1995, Global, Cooperative Agreement

The project, funded by USAID's Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation, channels funding (less than \$500,000) to CARE country offices on the basis of proposals to assist local NGOs. Proposals often involve training and strengthening local NGO capacity in project design, evaluation and other management skills.

Pros and Cons of Above Experience

Relations with USAID in the field vary from one country to another but are generally good. CARE began working with USAID in 1954 and the two agencies have learned to work with and respect each other. CARE believes it can continue to contribute to the delivery and implementation of US foreign assistance. Relationships with local NGOs constitute a relatively new experience for CARE and involve learning how it can contribute to their sustainable development. CARE's challenge is that it is big, foreign, bureaucratic, and accustomed to dealing with problems on its own. CARE has to get used to dealing with small, local, fragile organizations, to help them strengthen their capabilities (e.g., accountability, strategic planning) and become more efficient in project implementation. CARE realizes there is often a trade off between efficient implementation and institutional development.

Areas of Project Emphasis

Areas of project emphasis include: health, rural and urban rehabilitation, management and technical training, agricultural extension, environmental protection, small enterprise development, food distribution, and emergency programming.

Relationship to the Enhancement of Civil Society

In the past CARE saw itself mainly as a vehicle for implementing projects. More recently it is beginning to see its work as relating to civil society through cooperating with partner organizations and undertaking of several capacity-enhancing umbrella projects.

X. NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NEGRO WOMEN, INC.

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Experience with Umbrella Projects

The National Council has established on-going relationships with a number of women's organizations in Africa. Since 1979 it has concluded "twinning" agreements with national women's groups in Botswana, Senegal, Togo, and Zimbabwe which have fostered exchanges, provision of technical assistance, and training. The purpose is to upgrade the capabilities of local groups in project design, management, and evaluation, as well as to transfer skills in agriculture, primary education, nutrition, etc. USAID funding from the Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation enabled the NCNW to open and staff an office in Harare. In addition, the NCNW participates in USAID-financed umbrella projects in Egypt and Senegal.

Senegal PYO/NGO Umbrella Project, 1991-1996, Subgrant

NCNW is the recipient of a subgrant by Transcentury (see the New Transcentury Foundation project description above) for collaborating with local NGOs in agriculture, training, and health activities in the Thies region of Senegal. Activities include gardening, cattle raising, orchard cultivation, small enterprise, literacy training, health, millet mills, and latrines.

Private Voluntary Organization Support Project, 1992-1997, Egypt, Cooperative Agreement.

The project is aimed at increasing the institutional capacity of Egyptian NGOs to carry out community services, especially in the rural areas. Technical assistance is also provided in village environmental protection, micro enterprise development, water and health, family planning, agriculture and animal husbandry, and cooperative training.

Pros and Cons of Above Experience

Relationships with USAID and the local NGOs have both been very positive.

Areas of Project Emphasis

Areas of project emphasis include: agriculture, health, sanitation, literacy, family planning, animal husbandry, micro-enterprise development, and environmental protection.

Relationship to the Enhancement of Civil Society

Raising living standards among the poor and helping to empower rural and urban communities to shape their own destinies should have a positive impact on civil society in countries where NCNW supports programs.

PART III:
CONTACTS WITH
POTENTIAL ACTORS
&
INTERESTED PARTIES

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAFLI	ASIAN AMERICAN FREE LABOR INSTITUTE
AALC	AFRICAN AMERICAN FREE LABOR INSTITUTE
ADF	AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION
AIFLD	AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR FREE LABOR DEPARTMENT
ANE	ASIA NEAR EAST BUREAU, USAID
CIPE	CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL PRIVATE ENTERPRISE
CSIS	CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
ENI	EASTERN EUROPE AND NEWLY INDEPENDENT STATES BUREAU, USAID
FMF	THE FEMINIST MAJORITY FOUNDATION
FTUI	THE FREE TRADE UNION INSTITUTE
G/DG	GLOBAL BUREAU CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY, USAID
ICRC	INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS
IDR	INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH
IRI	INTERNATIONAL REPUBLICAN INSTITUTE
IYF	INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FOUNDATION
LAC	LATIN AMERICAN AND THE CARIBBEAN BUREAU, USAID
LWVEF	LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS EDUCATION FUND
NCNW	NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NEGRO WOMEN
NDI	NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE
NED	NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY
NIS	NEW INDEPENDENT STATES
OAU	ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY
PFC	BUREAU FOR POLICY AND PROGRAM COORDINATION, USAID
USIA	US INFORMATION AGENCY
USIP	US INSTITUTE FOR PEACE

INTRODUCTION

In order to ensure an effective and responsive design, the civil society program design team met with numerous USAID representatives, potential USPVO actors, and other interested parties. What follows is a list of these contacts, along with their contact information, and selected interview notes. Where information is available and relevant the interview notes for non-USAID actors contain organizational and activity descriptions, approaches, perspectives on civil society, and implications/considerations for civil society services.

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SELECTED INTERVIEW NOTES

USAID Selected Interview Notes

ANE Current Civil Society Activities and Service Recommendations

Lee Ann Ross, Chief, Office of Strategic Planning and Analysis

Most if not all of the Asian Missions are already conducting civil society activities within the rubric of the Asia Democracy program through which Missions assist local NGOs by making funds available to USPVO intermediaries (e.g., PACT, Asia Foundation, AAFLI).

Ross thought a Global Bureau PD&S project that provided a fund that Missions and bureaus could draw upon for financing evaluations, project design, and short term technical assistance would be useful. Additional useful activities include cross-country research on civil society topics, and training on common topics (e.g., NGO management, accounting, and organization). She also saw the proposed project as appropriate in countries in which USAID maintains a tiny staff and hasn't the capacity to deal with NGOs directly.

Richard Whitaker, Office of Regional Initiatives

Whitaker envisaged that a Global Bureau civil society facility would play an extremely valuable role if it could make small grants to NGOs in such fields as environment, legal matters, and women's organizations. Specifically, he sees USAID as playing a potentially significant role in supporting NGOs in such fields as civil rights, constitution drafting, and women's concerns. He cited Indonesia as an example of a country in which support for NGO programs was having an indirect effect on the furtherance of democratic objectives.

G/DG Initial Service Perspectives

Debra McFarland, Senior Rule of Law Advisor

McFarland envisioned the civil society facility as having the following generic functions: a) tracking trends and indicators, b) assessing lessons learned from its experience, c) disseminating information, d) providing civil society services to the field, e) supporting innovative ideas, f) providing facilities for training, g) offering advice on methodological issues, h) undertaking operational research, and i) providing mechanisms and resources that field missions can tap into.

She thought the facility should have the capacity to set up a body of technical resources that could meet both the facility's technical needs and provide outreach support to field missions. She considers the Latin American region as a fertile area for the facility to work in.

LAC Current Civil Society Activities and Service Recommendations

Ramon Daubon, Deputy Assistant Administrator
Richard Laudis, Project Development Officer, SPM
John Swallow, Acting Team Leader, RSD

It was mentioned that the Inter American Development Bank has committed itself to setting up a \$100 million fund to finance a series of national endowments to support civic organizations. The LAC Bureau itself is administering a regional civil society project (\$1.2 million, 5 years) which features NGO strengthening, networking, and information sharing. A number of LAC Missions have initiated bi-lateral projects, stimulated by this regional project. In the action plans of the LAC Missions, civil society is one of the few subjects in which new projects are being proposed, especially in municipal development. A centrally funded civil society project would be welcomed by the LAC missions.

Suggestions regarding the G/DG civil society project design include:

- 1) it should take a wide view and cover a broad range of subjects (let a 1,000 flowers bloom);
- 2) it should emphasize networking and mutual assistance among NGOs;
- 3) it should emphasize building local NGO capacity;
- 4) there is limited capacity and opportunity to encourage civil society at the national level (environmental and consumer matters being exceptions) but there is a wealth of opportunity at the local level and the project should deal with these opportunities -- Missions should know that local groups dealing with grass roots problems will have preference on project resources;
- 5) the project should focus on the more troubled societies in the region, particularly those with marginalized Indian populations such as Peerku and Bolivia; they have a stronger sense and a long tradition in civil society matters and are apt to be more receptive;
- 6) the project should offer a sounding board which the Missions can use for obtaining advice;
- 7) the scope of services should not be written too narrowly; it should provide funding for services for design and for rapid assessments (to get a sense of the civil society situation, what people are doing and with what success), and labor should be included in the scope but not restricted to the formal unions; and
- 8) it should address the interests and needs of women; participation by women is much stronger and more visible in the localities -- an extension of the home.

Non-USAID Selected Interview Notes

AFL/CIO

Philip Fishman, Assistant Director, Department of International Affairs

The Approach

The focus of the AFL/CIO's international program is with the non-elites. Most foreign assistance goes to existing elites but the labor movement's approach is to focus on those groups that lack power and are disenfranchised, and to help them help themselves. It emphasizes helping to build institutions that will survive.

Governments in developing countries provide very little to the workers in terms of health, credit, and cooperative services. Thus one of the main tasks of the US labor program is to work with the local unions to fill in the gaps. One of the remarkable things about trade unionism is that it cuts across gender and tribal lines.

The AFL/CIO's training emphasizes helping union officials with trade union administration, collecting dues, running meetings, and learning collective bargaining techniques to improve their negotiating methods.

Contribution to Democracy

Unions play an important role in moving a society toward democracy. Strengthening civil society in particular is an important way to diffuse power from the elites, to help organizations participate constructively in civil life. In the developing world there are a lot of institutional barriers that unions must confront. Although there is a lot of social legislation (e.g., labor codes dealing with labor rights, freedom of association, etc.), much of it is simply lip service written on paper and has not been institutionalized or made effective.

The AFL/CIO also works closely with non-labor civic organizations. The AFL/CIO's work in Indonesia is a good example: assistance was provided to human rights organizations in publication, communications, networking with international groups, etc. Its work in Thailand, Taiwan, and Malaysia are other examples.

Working with USAID: The Potential for a Regional Approach

If USAID wishes to promote civil society in undemocratic societies it must confront the fact that USAID traditionally operates on a government-to-government basis, and that repressive governments are not supportive of open societies. The four regional labor institutes offer an important mechanism for assistance to pro-civil society efforts. The institutes are organized on a regional basis and are not solely dependent on the status of a USAID's bi-lateral relationship with the local government of a given country. A regional approach offers more opportunities to integrate support for NGOs and trade unions, and a regional approach is the most effective way of meeting the challenge of repression. These advantages are exemplified by the work done in Thailand on voter registration.

African Development Foundation

Caroll N. Bouchard, Vice President

Organization and Activities Description

The ADF is a US government corporation funded by Congress, focusing on supporting grassroots development in Africa. It funds only African groups and organizations and provides no financing to US individuals or groups. Its field operations are staffed entirely by Africans. It is set up to respond to requests for assistance by African organizations and groups. A key project selection criterion is the sustainability of the proposed activity and how well it will be able to generate local support. ADF has a small research section which finances studies by African scholars.

During the life of ADF there has been a shift of program emphasis from agriculturally-related activities (60-65% of total funding to 40-45%) to support for small enterprise activities. ADF's greatest success is its support to small enterprise development at the grassroots level.

Considerations for Civil Society Services

With respect to the civil society design work, Bouchard hoped that we would include women's and youth NGOs within its scope. He also cautioned the following: 1) ADF's experience suggests that assistance to NGOs must be acceptable to the government; and 2) approximately 60% of African NGOs are de facto governmental agencies and the implications for project objectives must be considered. He also advocated caution in relationships with African "think tanks" affiliated with universities which too often are tied to government and have strong political biases. Local capacity building should be a key element in any NGO program. Several models for the services should be developed to take into consideration regional differences.

Aga Kahn Foundation

Pat Scheib, Program Officer

Organization and Activities Description

The Aga Kahn Foundation, USA is the US affiliate of the widespread and complex Aga Kahn Development Network which involves a multiplicity of functions and institutions headed by the Ismaili Muslim leader, including development programs, investment promotion, and a broad range of cultural, educational, and health services. While originally intended for the benefit of Ismaili Muslims in South Asia and East Africa, its programs are now reportedly non-sectarian, although their geographic focus remains the same:¹ India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania. The US Foundation is one of several "northern" offices (Canada, Britain, and Portugal being the others) that joins with Western donors in co-financing development activities abroad. The headquarters of the Foundation are in Switzerland but its secretariat is located in France.

The Foundation's program focus is health, education, and rural development. It is a grant making institution providing funding for NGO activities in the foregoing fields in the above mentioned countries. It monitors and evaluates but does not implement the programs it funds.

Aga Kahn uses its own funding to leverage complementary funding from Western donors including USAID and CIDA. Its programs are aimed at reaching the poor and disadvantaged; it emphasizes active participation by project beneficiaries and sees sustainability as a leading project objective.

Perspective on Civil Society

The Foundation does not directly address the issue of civil society in its programs but believes that its work indirectly supports that goal by strengthening NGOs and contributing to the enhancement of a positive environment for civil society. As an illustration of the latter, Scheib pointed to a conference in Nairobi that the Foundation co-sponsored in 1986 (along with USAID and others) on strengthening an "enabling environment" for "an effective private sector contribution to development".

¹With the exception of Kijikistan which was recently added.

Amideast

Nagala El-Bassioni, Senior Program Specialist, Development of Democratic Institutions

Organization and Activities Description

Amideast has over 40 years experience in working in the Middle East, with field offices in virtually every country in the region. Currently, they have a Cooperative Agreement with USAID/ANE which is partly to increase their capacity to undertake DG activities in six countries: Tunisia, Lebanon, Morocco, Yemen, Egypt, and Jordan. The Agreement has a buy-in capability but does not seem to have been used much by regional USAID Missions. They undertake TA/Training in the area of capacity building and small grants. Specifically, they have worked with the media in Lebanon and Yemen; provided training for parliamentarians and Judges in the Supreme Court of Lebanon; and worked for legal rights with PVOs/NGOs and human rights organizations in Egypt.

Perspective on Civil Society

Amideast does not perceive cooperatives or credit union movements as being very strong in the region. Professional and business associations, on the other hand, are very important, as are women's organizations (e.g., Jordan's federation of business women), and housing associations. Municipal/local governments are also extremely important in the region.

More specifically, Yemen has a strong, healthy NGO sector; Morocco has only a very small number of NGOs; Lebanon has a significant NGO community as the government is very weak; and the Maghreb countries generally have strong governments and weak non-governments. NGOs are, to a large extent, based on the strong leader model. A specific NGO of interest is El Taller in Tunisia, which is both a regional and international NGO working with NGOs in capacity building.

Considerations for Civil Society Services

Egypt and the West Bank/Gaza appear to be the most fertile ground for a civil society support project. Yemen, Tunisia, Morocco, and Jordan are more difficult and USAID Missions are hesitant to support civil society given that NGOs are perceived as a threat to the current regimes there.

Brookings Institute

Paul Salim, Middle East Fellow, Foreign Policy Studies Program

Considerations for Civil Society Services

Salim cautioned the need to deal with the political issue of Islam. Liberals are caught between authoritarian governments and fundamentalist Islam (e.g., in Algeria). Also, the tendency has been to concentrate on the more specialized civic organizations or "civics" which directly engage the government, are urban-based, and elite led; versus the multipurpose NGOs and the local level organizations with whom they work. The focus of the civics tends to be on the rule of law and the enabling legal and regulatory environment under which civil society operations. Finally, one needs to continually question the democratic/civic nature of civil society; one should not automatically assume that they operate democratically. The focus should be on civic education, or promoting good citizens and citizenship.

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Center for Democracy

Patricia Palmer, Chief Operating Officer

Caleb McCarry, Vice President, Americas Program

Organization and Activities Description

The Center for Democracy is a program making organization, not a grant making organization. It operates on a budget of approximately \$2.3 million, some of which is provided by USAID and the remainder by foundations and corporate donors. It started operations in 1986, stimulated by the Kissinger report on Central America and the initiation of regional programs to strengthen democratic institutions. It undertakes a broad range of activities ranging from technical assistance in legislative drafting, the monitoring of elections, parliamentary exchanges, and conferences on a variety of topics related to democracy and civil society. It maintains offices in Moscow, Costa Rica, and France (where it has had a long time relationship with the Council of Europe in Strasbourg). Its areas of emphasis are Eastern Europe, the NIS, and Latin America. It responds to requests for assistance, for example a request by the President of Bulgaria for advice on how to reconstruct the country's intelligence service within a democratic framework. Judicial reform has been another major subject of the Center's work with sponsorship of conferences on the issue of an independent judiciary and the problem of the intimidation of judges.

Center for International Private Enterprise

John D. Sullivan, Executive Director

Organization and Activities Description

CIPE is an affiliate of the US Chamber of Commerce and is funded by the NED, the Pew Foundation, and USAID (2 grants and a cooperative agreement). It has its own officers and Board of Directors. Established in 1983, it has sponsored approximately 300 programs in 50 countries. CIPE insists upon substantial local contributions from its beneficiaries (amounting to about 40%). It has an overseas office in Hungary and often works with and through US chambers of commerce in foreign countries.

A major function of CIPE is to provide grants to organizations abroad that are supporting private enterprise and a market-oriented approach to economic reform. These are mostly business organizations and other private sector groups. CIPE establishes grant agreements with local organizations, who then undertake activities in legislative advisory services, economic policy analysis, press training, corporate governance, and other steps to make the private sector more open and competitive. An interesting and reportedly successful CIPE program focuses on legislative advisory services in which a local group will provide background and analytical information on legislative and policy issues to local legislators to enable them to carry out their work more effectively. In addition to its grant program, CIPE also carries out a training program, publishes publications and conducts research. Much of its training is now carried out by local graduates of CIPE training and these organizations are also engaging in the training of trainers.

Perspective on Civil Society

CIPE sees a dynamic, vibrant private sector as an integral and critical component of civil society. Making the private sector less bound by anti-competition restrictions, privatizing parastatals, and encouraging entrepreneurship (especially new small businesses) is the commercial counterpart to socio-political reform. It sees such emphases as reinforcing concepts of individual effort and self determination, freedom of choice, and competition.

Center for Strategic and International Studies

Sidney Weintraub, William Simon Chair in Political Economy

Current Research

Weintraub said he is seeking funding for a CSIS study on countries that have, or are going through, dual transitions -- from non-democratic rule to democratic and from statist economies to market economies. The study will analyze a number of countries: Mexico, Portugal, the Czech Republic, Poland, Taiwan, Korea, Argentina, and Chile. He noted that Latin America was making great progress in moving toward market-oriented systems. He also noted that CSIS has produced a number of studies on elections in Latin American and the Caribbean which analyze the electoral situation before and after the actual voting.

Citizens Democracy Corps

Cass DuRant, Program Officer (Romania, Bulgaria)

Organization and Activities Description

The Citizens Democracy Corps is a USPVO dedicated to helping private entrepreneurship in the Eastern/Central European countries and the NIS. USAID is a major funding source for its work. It functions somewhat like the International Executive Service Corps (with which it maintains close relations) by sending volunteer experts to assist existing private businesses (mostly small or medium) with their problems. Volunteers from American industry typically serve for two months, advising local management on such topics as financial planning, marketing and sales, the introduction of new technologies, training in industrial skills, etc. They do not work on matters relating to the conversion of defense industries. The organization has offices in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Khabarovsk (Far East); and is planning to establish offices in Siberia and the Volga region.

Civicus

Miklos Marschall, Executive Director

Organization and Activities Description

Civicus was founded in 1993-1994 by a group of donor foundations and activist NGOs. It was designed to serve as the global umbrella for the emerging third, or independent, sectors (civil societies) throughout the world. Specifically, it advocates autonomy for this sector, and is thus a membership organization.

Civicus has commissioned six regional studies of civil society (overviews) and is just beginning to hold a series of regional meetings to share the results with the regions concerned. The agenda is as follows:

- | | | | |
|----|---------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. | Latin America | October 14-16, 1994 | Rio de Janeiro, Brazil |
| 2. | Africa | October 25-28, 1994 | Johannesburg, South Africa |
| 3. | Asia Pacific | October 14-16, 1994 | Manila, Philippines |
| 4. | Middle East | November 1994 | Cairo, Egypt |
| 5. | North America | October 23-25, 1994 | Chicago, Illinois |
| 6. | Europe | November 24-25, 1994 | Budapest, Hungary |

The World Assemble was to be held in Mexico City, January 10-13, 1995.

Perspective on Civil Society

The third sector can only exist if the public and private sectors are functioning well. Civicus believes the sector must be self-regulatory. This requires a favorable legal and fiscal environment.

No one definition of civil society is useful. In general, it is defined in opposition to, or anti-, totalitarian and militaristic. Civicus aspires to develop a rating system of different countries in relation to the freedom of civil societies, comparable to that for human rights.

Civil Society in the Middle East Project

Dr. Augustus Richard Norton, Director

Jillian Schwedler, Program Officer

Project Description and Outputs

The project began in 1991 with support from the MacArthur and Ford Foundations, and is now winding down. It will include articles on civil society for virtually every Middle Eastern country (with the notable exceptions of Iraq and Morocco). While the project attempted to have Middle Eastern scholars as article authors, political sensitivities and other problems made it necessary to use American Middle-East specialists in a number of cases. The first volume of articles generated by the project will soon be distributed; the second volume will appear next year. The publisher is E.J. Leiden of the Netherlands.

In addition to the two main volumes, the project will produce a volume entitled "Toward Civil Society in the Middle East? A Primer." It will contain summaries of the articles in the main volumes and a full bibliography. In addition, Norton and Farhad Kazemi of New York University are co-authoring an article with the provisional title "Civil Society and the prospects for Political Reform," based in part on a recent conference held at Aspen Colorado. The project also produced a 27 minute documentary "Quest for Change: Civil Society in the Middle East" for general audiences and undergraduates.

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The Feminist Majority Foundation

Christine Onyango, Research Associate

Organization and Activity Description

The FMF is an active NGO concerned with women's issues both in the US and abroad. Internationally, one of its major activities is the preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women which will be held in Beijing in September 1995. FMF's head, along with the head of the National Council of Negro Women, is Co-chair of the US Network for the UN Fourth Conference. This involves numerous activities aimed at alerting women and other NGOs to the significance of the meeting, soliciting their participation in conference preparations, and organizing sessions on the agenda and attendance at the conference. Linkage with the US government on the conference is through the Women's Bureau of the US Department of Labor and the Bureau of International Organization Affairs of the State Department.

Free Trade Union Institute

Paul Somogyi, Executive Director

Dick Wilson, Director of Programs

Randall Garton, Associate Director

Organization and Activities Description

The FTUI operates the AFL/CIO's international activities in Eastern Europe and the NIS countries. International work in the three other regions (Latin America, Asia, and Africa) are backstopped by 3 sister institutes: AIFLD (American Institute for Free Labor Development), AAFLI (Asian American Free Labor Institute), and AALC (African American Labor Center), which have recently co-located with FTUI. FTUI also serves as the "core institute" between NED and the other institutes. In addition to NED, FTUI receives funding from USAID and USIA for particular activities. FTUI operates four field offices in Europe/NIS: Kiev, Moscow, Sofia and Warsaw.

FTUI has activities in 12 European and NIS countries with the objective of promoting free trade unionism and a positive local environment for trade unionism. Modes of assistance include financial transfers, provision of equipment and commodities, training, conferences, and support to the media, including union newspapers. Emphasis is on supporting free trade unionism in Russia and the Ukraine, but the 1993 annual report also refers to helping the unions in Poland, the Baltic states, Hungary, Albania, Belarus, Romania, and Yugoslavia.

Perspectives on Civil Society

A vibrant civil society is essential to trade unionism in that freedom of association is one of civil society's essential attributes. Civic associations in the old regime were "front" organizations of the party. One of the major problems confronting free unionism today is the tenacity with which the old line unionists are entrenched and resisting change. For example, FTUI has had to work with insurgent strike committees, by-passing formal union structures. FTUI is increasingly working with newly formed unions. While the former may go through the motions of democratic procedures (e.g. leadership elections), when one examines how delegates were actually chosen one sees the continuing influence of the entrenched leadership.

Considerations for Civil Society Services

Traditional USPVOs are often uneasy about taking risks with untried NGOs. A civil society support project should have a direct grant making capacity.

The following are observations made about relationships with USAID (E.Europe/NIS):

1. Decision making on activity proposals for Eastern Europe has been decentralized to the field which puts an added burden on USAID field staffs, increased communications problems, and has slowed down the approval process. FTUI preferred an earlier system wherein decisions were taken in Washington. A related problem is the work overload of the small European USAIDs and the insufficiency of staff familiar with the country

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situation and institutions -- also a lot of the USAID officers are transfers from Africa and Asia where there are vast dissimilarities with development problems in Europe.

2. FTUI expressed support for USAID/NIS' approach wherein the USAID and FTUI field staff were brought together with their Washington counterparts for a solid week of program planning over a 2-3 year time horizon, providing an agreed framework for program implementation.
3. They noted that providing USAID funds on a regional basis resulted in a lot of pulling and hauling between local USAID Missions for pieces of the pie. They suggested that the AIFLD formula, in which regional funds are additive to bilateral funds, was a more efficient mechanism.
4. Given the importance of trade unionism to civil society, they recommended that a labor-oriented body be included in the project's implementation arrangements, perhaps as a subcontractor to the prime organization

Global Coalition for Africa
Aileen Marshall

Organization and Activities Description

The Coalition is currently undertaking a comparative study of political transitions in Africa of six or seven countries. Individual country studies are being conducted by African researchers. The project is partly funded by USAID (the Africa Bureau). The papers were scheduled for completion in the Fall 1994.

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Grupo Esquel/Esquel Group Foundation

Regina Filipe Yriart, Chairman

Organization and Activities Description

Esquel Group Foundation is the apex for the network of Esquel Groups working in seven Latin American countries. It is registered as a public charity foundation in the US, although it does no grant-making.

Perspective on Civil Society

Yriart cautioned the need to think about differing needs of the various regions, e.g., historical, socio-economic development, and the basis for voluntary association. Also in need of consideration is the distinction between political/civic oriented civil society organizations and socio-economic organizations. The Latin American case is distinctive because the military was negotiated out of power as opposed to being kicked out. History in the region has demonstrated that economic crisis leads to political crisis. The growth of a middle class in the 1970s who saw their status threatened during the 1980s' economic decline, pushed not only for political reform, but for regime change as well (not for change in the existing government). There is also a growing global crisis of perceived credibility of governments by their citizens.

International NGOs can be primary, or at least important, policy advocates on environmental, human rights, and women's issues. The Catholic Church also plays a significant role. In Latin America the laws dictating the environment for civil society date from the authoritarian era of 50 years ago (this is in contrast to those in Africa which date to the colonial era). On the other hand, many LAC countries have "beautiful" constitutions; it is the enabling legislation which needs to be revised. This requires legal reform and education.

Inter-Action

Carolyn Long, Vice President

Organization and Activities Description

Inter-Action organizational members who are involved in civil society support include IDR, PACT, and World Learning. Individuals working in the area include: Jane Covey (IDR-Asia), Cheryl Morden (LWS-LAC), Alice Smith (Winrock), and Debbie Meyers (German Marshall Fund).

Inter-Action has chosen civil society as the topic for its 1995 learning agenda. This will entail a review of the literature and the preparation of a paper. The effort will build on a paper already prepared in 1993 and submitted to USAID to solicit funds for a civil society support fund. Lisa Vaneklasen will head this task for Inter-Action. A specific focus will be on a "continuum of civility to conflict," or the ability to manage conflict as distinguishing between successful democracies and failed states.

Johns Hopkins University

Lester Salamon, Director, Institute for Policy Studies

Organization and Activities Description

The Institute is the hub of an international cluster of organizations and individuals working on the study and enhancement of civic organizations. A major activity is the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project ("third sector") which provides linkages among 200 "local associates" working in 14 "target countries" (US, Japan, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Hungary, Sweden, Brazil, Ghana, Egypt, Thailand, India). Countries were chosen to reflect varying social and economic patterns, the world's major religious traditions and the developing nations.

The Institute and its local groups receive funding from 30 public and private sources. It is the sponsor of the International Fellows in Philanthropy Program which is now in its seventh year, offers fellowships for study at the Institute, and brings its alumni together regularly for conferences, constituting a rich network of expertise and experience on the subject. The network now encompasses 3-400 fellows or trainees who are holding follow-up workshops on their own and are now starting work on the training of trainers. They have recently started work in Russia.

The "third sector" project has a series of publications including an overall summary volume; monographs on 8 industrialized countries; a "developing countries" volume covering India, Brazil, Ghana, Thailand, and Egypt; and a volume on "definitions" and summaries of all of the above. The country volumes contain material on the nature of civil society, its legal structure, funding practices, and how the sector has evolved over the years. Salamon said they are now thinking about a second phase to their research program in which groups of researchers would work on several countries on a regional basis with the intent of producing additional material and training teams of researchers in the process.

Approach

According to its brochure: "... the Project seeks systematically to (a) analyze the scope, structure, financing, and the role of the private voluntary sector in a cross-section of countries, (b) improve understanding of the history and legal position of this sector and the factors that strengthen or weaken it from place to place, c) provide a better foundation for government and private policies toward these organizations, (d) improve general public awareness of this sector, and (e) foster local capability to carry similar work forward in the future."

Perspectives on Civil Society

Salamon noted that the tax exempt status of private organizations was largely co-terminous with that of the third sector. Although religious organizations are formally part of that sector, Salamon usually does not include them in his research because of their differing role. He indicated that in Europe the central government was equated with "the state," while local government institutions were not and were almost considered like NGOs. The Institute is pushing for the strengthening of local self government, an approach with which USAID agrees.

Kettering Foundation

Randa Slim

Civil Society Activities Description

Kettering is undertaking an international civil society project/network. The Foundation works in Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East and New Independent States, and less so in Africa and the Asia Pacific. The Sixth Annual International Meeting was slated for Barbados in February 1995. Civil society discussions are based on the town meeting concept/approach, where concerned individuals meet around issues of common concern.

International Peace Academy

Ameen Jon

Organization and Activities Description

The Academy is described as a “respected think tank” which emphasizes conflict resolution with a heavy emphasis on Africa. It has held three annual “consultations” on the subject, held in Arusha, Addis Ababa, and Cairo, using the Organization of African Unity as its institutional collaborator. The aim of its work is to revitalize OAU’s role as an agent for addressing **interstate** conflicts and to broaden its role as a mechanism for dealing with **intrastate** conflicts. Jon said its proposals on the matter had been approved at a high level meeting of the OAU members in 1993. Its consultations with the OAU this year were influenced by events in Rwanda and there was considerable sentiment among those present for enlarging the OAU function to peacekeeping activities on the ground in areas of conflict. The 1995 conference will deal with the subject of the role of **civil society** in conflict resolution and will be attended by civil society representatives rather than government delegates.

International Republican Institute

Shirley Green, Director of Program Support

Organization and Activities Description

The International Republican Institute (IRI) is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to advancing democracy worldwide. Established in 1984, IRI conducts a wide range of programs outside the United States designed to promote and strengthen democratic ideals and institutions. IRI's programs are tailored to the needs of the local participants in the host country. They range from basic instruction in civic responsibility and the mechanics of organizing political parties and running campaigns for public office, to conferences on the legislative process for newly elected parliamentarians. IRI receives funds from the US government and from private sources. IRI receives government funding from two sources: the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), a federally funded institute established in 1984 by an Act of Congress, and USAID.

Approach

IRI's focus is strengthening democracy abroad by supporting groups working to improve the political process (e.g., training pro-democratic groups in campaigning, media relations, communications, campaign management, election preparation, poll watching, etc.).

Support to Civil Society

Support to civil society groups abroad is not a main focus of IRI's program, which concentrates on groups and activities of a more overtly political nature. There are, however, exceptions, such as a subgrant to the League of Kenyan Women Voters. Where IRI works most broadly with civil society groups and NGOs in Latin America where it believes the NGO sector is the strongest and has the longest tradition. In that region IRI has provided support to local NGOs for such things as support to local policy think tanks, constitutional reform, and electoral reform.

International Youth Foundation

Joann Smith, Program Associate/Grants Compliance Officer

Organization and Activities Description

The Foundation, which is dedicated to supporting measures to benefit youth and children overseas, is located in Battle Creek, Michigan and operates through "partnerships" with local organizations which have similar purposes. Sometimes the IYF will support the creation of such an organization if one does not already exist. It is presently working through local "partners" in Poland, Ecuador, Germany (east), the Philippines, Thailand, and South Africa. It is considering funding activities in the following additional countries: Ireland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Egypt (the Egypt program would be regional).

There is considerable variation in the approach and emphasis of local partners from country to country but all are grant making organizations. Emphasis is on local youth organizations that are working on enhancing the skills of children and youth leaders (e.g. hosting workshops for youth leaders, supporting NGO leadership sessions, etc.). IYF also supports local efforts to increase awareness of youth needs and problems and to foster pro-youth philanthropic work among local organizations.

Joint Center for Economic and Political Research

Erica Young, Librarian

Kenneth Lungmeyer, former Director, International Programs

Organization and Activities Description

The Center was established in 1970 with major funding from the Ford Foundation to serve as a support and training institution for Afro-American officials elected to office as a result of the enfranchisement of the Black electorate following the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Services to Black elected officials in training, expanding governance opportunities, and research and information dissemination were its main activities through the 1970s. In the 1980s, with an increasingly well established and sophisticated cadre of Black elected officials, the Center shifted its focus to that of a research and policy center and has been working on a number of issues such as welfare reform, minority business development, black economic status, and education. Since 1990 the issue of black economic advancement has been a major focus of the Center's research, information dissemination, and publications activities.

The Center' work overseas is mostly focused on South Africa. The Center is mostly concerned with topics relevant to African American concerns and less so with civil society issues overseas.

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League of Women Voters Education Fund

Mathew Farrey, Administrative Assistance, International Relations and Election Services

Organization and Activities Description

The League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) was established in 1957 to inform American Citizens on public policy issues and increase citizen participation in the electoral process. It assists the League's 1,100 state and local Leagues by conducting educational activities on a wide range of issues and conducts leadership training sessions, conferences, and seminars. It has been involved in international matters since 1947, conducting democracy training programs in Europe, Japan, and Latin America. More recently local Leagues have conducted exchanges with women in the ex-Soviet and ex-Communist countries, Latin America, and Africa.

LWVEF established an "Emerging Democracies Program" in 1992 aimed at assisting pro-democracy activities in Central and Eastern Europe with initial emphasis on Poland, including assisting the growth of a civic network among parliamentarians, students, teachers, business people, and NGO leaders. Training programs conducted in that effort were subsequently adopted for use in Hungary. Topics include "get out the vote campaigns," providing non-partisan information to candidates and voter, election monitoring, organizing candidates' debates, etc.

USAID, NED, the Soros Foundation and USIA participate in funding the emerging democracies program. More recently LWVEF has obtained support from the NIS Rule of Law program for work in the ex-Soviet countries.

The Mott Foundation

Ann Richards, Staff Writer

Organization and Activities Description

The Mott Foundation's present focus is to support the work of organization in the "third sector," particularly NGOs, environmental groups, and small business organizations. It is doing so by making grants to US organizations for the benefit of local groups abroad, but is beginning to shift to assisting the latter directly. Geographically, its emphasis is on Eastern/Central Europe and South Africa; accordingly, it has established field offices in Prague and South Africa. At present it is mostly reacting to "good proposals" from other organizations but is in the process of developing a more explicit organizational and funding strategy.

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National Conference of Catholic Bishops

Gerald Powers, Foreign Policy Adviser, Department of Social Development and World Peace,
Office of International Justice and Peace

Msgr R. George Saraukas, Executive Director, Office to AID the Catholic Church in Central and
Eastern Europe

Organization and Activities Description

The National Conference of Catholic Bishops funds and backstops a number of international programs, including conflict resolution in Northern Ireland, support for the reconstruction of religious activities in Eastern and Central Europe, and programs concerned with migration and refugees.

Powers is particularly active in Northern Ireland matters, working to alleviate issues that separate Catholics and Protestants. Significant progress has already been made in the issues of voting rights and in housing. A major unresolved issue is that of fair employment, that is, ensuring that Catholic workers are treated fairly in the labor market -- a major problem given that unemployment in Northern Ireland is running at 16%. Another aspect is encouraging US investment in Northern Ireland to create additional jobs.

Powers referred to the work being directed in East and Central Europe by Msgr Saraukas (see below) where an effort has been launched to rebuild the Catholic Church not just in a physical and religious sense, but as an institution providing social services. Saraukas' office administers a program of \$6-8 million a year in grants and a volunteer staff of 120 to build or strengthen public media (TV, radio, print), publications, and social and medical services. This work is complemented by programs run by Catholic Relief Services which is training church personnel in social service skills and trying to rebuild Catholic-sponsored social service networks (health, education) in Eastern/Central Europe. The effort concentrates on four fields: 1) training of priests and religious women to serve as the next generation of church leaders, 2) production of religious educational materials (including translation and publication), 3) assistance to mass media facilities (TV, radio and printing houses) and personnel training, and 4) strengthening social service capacity, including counseling on social problems. The program (whose initial collection produced \$6 million) now runs 700 projects in 21 countries. It works in close cooperation with Catholic Relief Services and with the local Caritas organizations.

Another major international program sponsored by the National Conference addressed migration and refugees.

Considerations for Civil Society Services

Powers cautioned about the need to be very selective in choosing ecclesiastic NGO partners to work within civil society activities in Europe. He noted that there were a lot of fringe groups and unreliable organizations headed by ex-Communist church leaders or non-ecclesiastics who were trying to find work and lacked credibility in the community.

Powers mentioned that Africa was the area in which the Catholic religion was growing fastest and that the Church was becoming a force for conflict resolution and civil society in Africa. He mentioned a conference that his office had sponsored at Duquesne University recently which brought together US conflict resolution experts and third country observers with Catholic Bishops from a number of African countries which are experiencing conflicts.

National Council of Negro Women, Inc.

Lucille Thomas, Director, International Division

Organization and Activities Description

The National Council of Negro Women was founded in 1935 to help articulate the needs and aspirations of black Americans and to provide a means for organization and cooperation. It now includes 35 affiliates -- sororities, women's professional bodies, and church groups, as well as community-based organizations (sections comprising 250 persons). It claims an outreach to approximately 4 million persons. Its activities focus on civil rights, family planning, economic development, and programs for the elderly. It maintains offices in Atlanta, New York, New Orleans, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC.

The International Division was formed in 1975 to provide a linkage and means of communication and support between black American and African women, and to work toward improving the socio-economic conditions of the latter. It is also concerned with such subjects as conflict resolution and electoral processes. It is carrying out activities in Haiti, South Africa, Senegal, Egypt, and Zimbabwe and has established offices in the latter three countries. In both Senegal and Egypt the NCNW is operating with assistance from USAID which provides funds to enable it to make subgrants to African NGOs. The program in Egypt includes a \$10 million grant for subgrants to Egyptian NGOs; under the project, USAID must approve the NGO which NCNW wishes to support but neither USAID nor the GOE are involved in approving the subgrants themselves.

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National Democratic Institute
Kenneth Wollack, President

Organization and Activities Description

NDI focuses on six functional areas of DG throughout the major regions: political party training, election processes, strengthening legislatures, local government, civil-military relations, and civic organizations. It engages in political development in a non-partisan way, hosting roundtables between legislators and civic organizations around issues of common concern.

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Overseas Development Council

Joan Nelson, Senior Fellow

Considerations for Civil Society Services

The civil society idea has become a vibrant one with many “think tanks,” and includes a broad range of self-seeking organizations (NGOs, unions, business associations, etc.). USAID must decide what it is trying to promote with respect to its interest in civil society. Nelson thinks of civil society as neither an absolute good nor a threat. She suggests USAID think of various categories of voluntary organizations but make no assumptions as to their inherent worth or faults. USAID needs to think how it can promote versions of civil society which fit in better with workable government and voluntary participation. Some also say, “the more participation the better,” but that may not always be the case when a multiplicity of organizations are single mindedly pursuing their own narrow aims with resulting conflict and gridlock. USAID needs to ask itself to what end does it seek to further civil society? Also, what can an outside agency like USAID do effectively in supporting civil societies abroad given its strengths and limitations? A further issue is that “civil society” takes on different connotations in countries with major ethnic tensions: voluntary organizations in such countries will be self-segregated; ethnic self-assertion and protection become overriding considerations. Should the civil society facility address this issue?

PACT (Private Agencies Cooperating Together)

Louis Mitchell, CEO

Leslie Mitchell, Program Officer, Eastern Europe and the NIS

Organization and Activities Description

PACT began in 1971 as an intermediary between USAID and a number of USPVOs, receiving support from the Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation of USAID. With the phase-out of this support, PACT has evolved to an independent NGO competing for funds from various sources, mostly USAID, for assisting NGOs in the developing world. It is currently operating 19 projects in nine countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. It has an annual Budget of \$18 million and a staff of 150. PACT is currently in midst of developing a new strategic plan.

Categories of NGO activities supported by PACT include organizational development, non-formal education, training, monitoring and evaluation, micro-enterprise development, AIDs education and prevention, democratic pluralism, finance, and management. PACT considers that its major areas of technical expertise as an organization are: 1) training and technical assistance, 2) networking/educational exchange, 3) grant management, and 4) publications. As part of the strategic planning exercise, PACT is preparing a bibliography of reference materials.

Approach

Geographically, PACT will focus on regions and countries where it already has a presence or experience. In terms of programs, it will emphasize strengthening the NGO sector with priority to small enterprise, health, child welfare, environment, participatory governance, women's issues, and human rights. PACT is interested in expanding its work in Eastern Europe, the NIS countries, and the Middle East.

Perspective on Civil Society

The draft strategic plan states: "PACT's mission is to contribute to the growth of civil societies... by strengthening the community-focused non-profit sector worldwide and by working with strategic partners to identify and implement participatory development approaches which promote social, economic, political, and environmental justice."

US Institute for Peace

Timothy Sisk, Program Officer

Organization and Activities Description

The Institute is an autonomous entity established by Congress in 1984 "to limit international violence" by investigating and studying the basic circumstances leading to war and peace and to focus on the specific situations or conflicts and approaches toward their resolution. In addition to research the Institute seeks to disseminate the results of its work among practitioners of foreign affairs and to the public at large. It operates on an annual Congressional budget of about \$11 million per year of which about 25% is devoted to grants to organizations and individuals, here and abroad. Grants are in the range of \$25-40,000. It also operates fellowship programs for scholars and practitioners and sponsors conferences and seminars on subjects related to conflict resolution and on civil-military relations. It manages a library and data base. USIP held a major conference on conflict resolution titled "managing chaos" with participation by NGO/PVOs on November 30-December 1, 1995.

Perspective on Civil Society

The Institute sees civil society as a major circumstance or component of conflict resolution. Some of its grants relate to strengthening civil society bodies, e.g. to NGOs in South Africa. The Institute supports organizations that represent key interests in society, such as trade unions and business organizations. Too often in the developing world such bodies have no means to communicate with policy makers. There is a lack and need in much of the developing world for intermediary institutions that can relate interest groups to public policy. Sisk gave as an illustration the National Economic Forum that was set up in South Africa to bring various interest groups together to dialogue with the government on macro-economic policy.

Considerations for Civil Society Services

Sisk thought a USAID-supported initiative in civil society could be most beneficial. He suggested that the project focus on organizations that have a strong policy perspective. He said the South African experience was a model of what USAID could do: during the apartheid years USAID was limited to working with NGOs and worked with a broad range of interest groups and intermediary organizations which played important roles in the transition to post apartheid.

He suggested that USAID needed to coordinate its civil society activities with those of other philanthropies, such as the Ford Foundation. He thought more attention needed to be paid to the potential role of civic organizations in "preventive diplomacy", i.e. early action in conflict resolution before disputes deteriorate into open conflict. IPA has undertaken a special initiative in this regard and is coming out with a major publication.² It deals with, among other topics, the role NGOs can and do play in terms of early action on dispute resolution.

²Being prepared by Michael Lund (202-429-3860).

World Learning

Tom Kelly, Project Director, PVO/NIS Project

Elizabeth Gardiner, Consultant

Kathy Kalinowski, Program Assistant

PVO/NIS Project Description

In operation for two years, the project is an umbrella project which makes subgrants to (mainly) USPVOs for collaborative activities with NIS NGOs. The latter do not receive funds directly from the project. Subgrants are made on a wide variety of topics, including health, management, institutional development, women's affairs, childhood protection, relief activities, and many others. Subgrants range from \$150,000 to \$750,000. The project has been extended to 4.5 years and anticipates providing \$25 million over its term. Forty percent of the 260 proposals have been funded. Decisions on proposals are made by outside panels of experts, not World Learning. Kelly mentioned that several other NIS projects have subgrant components, including those on the rule of law, environmental protection, and health. Grantees must contribute 25% of total proposal costs. There is a lot of variation with respect to what proportion of proposal resources are made available to the NIS NGO and what proportion are managed by the USPVO on the NGO's behalf. Forty percent of the accepted proposals were made by USPVOs that had no previous experience with USAID.

Considerations for Civil Society Services

Kelly mentioned that a new USAID-financed NGO umbrella project for Russia was just getting underway and would be managed by a USPVO consortium that include Save the Children and the Center for Democracy. He thought that the resources for USPVO/NGO activities in the NIS countries being made available by ENI might be "saturating the market" for worthwhile proposals and wondered whether a Global Bureau project would get many requests from the NIS countries.

The following are lessons learned by World Learning in the course of conducting its programs:

1. Subgrant making is a very labor intensive function and USAID and the USPVOs tend to overestimate the latter's absorptive capacity.
2. USAID and subgrantees must be very proactive and can't expect a flow of proposals without substantial technical assistance and guidance to the NGOs.
3. USAID too often makes grants to USPVOs on the basis of the appeal of their proposals rather than on their ability to manage funds.
4. Conversely, too often grants are made to organizations on the basis of their record or status in the "old boy network" rather than on the basis of need.

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World Vision

Tom Getman, Government Relations Office

Organization and Activities Description

World Vision is organized much like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The Office of Government Relations is a technical advisory group which focuses on the interface between government and NGOs.

The office provides education, intermediation, and mentoring functions to foster relations between government and NGOs in furthering democratization. Activities include seminar series, specific consulting assignments in crisis spots (i.e., Palestine, Rwanda, South Africa), participation in multi-dimensional working groups, training, and reconciliation. Much of the activities are informal in nature focusing on common ground, "off-the-record." Specifically, these relate to nurturing personal and spiritual efforts to seek for common ground, such as prayer breakfasts and cross-sector working groups. These informal activities are intended to be the basis for a framework to support civil society. Efforts are focused on "giving people the opportunity to see their own power" -- including NGO, embassy, and government representatives. Activities are internationally focused emphasizing government-NGO relations within particular countries, as well as internationally (i.e., working with US policy makers with potential impact on civil society issues in countries of concern).

Approach

Especially in their reconciliation work, World Vision emphasizes their members' existing personal and professional networks. Constant attention is given to nurturing these contacts and "mentoring" them through reconciliation or government-NGO relationship processes.

Perspective on Civil Society

World Vision believes that NGO responsibility includes spending significant human resource time on building civil society which entails intersecting with government to design democratization at the grassroots level. The purpose of promoting civil society is to equip people at the local level to participate in civil debate and civil institutions. This necessarily entails a "cross-agency" perspective.

Considerations for Civil Society Services

In pursuing civil society support, Mr. Getman recommends looking at existing successful models, such as that of South Africa. Such models provide encouragement and hope in the face of reconciling challenging differences. This model was applied in Mozambique, Palestine, and Malawi. At the time of the interview, an effort was underway to send Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu to Rwanda to pursue reconciliation.

In terms of USAID, more work is needed at this personal level. World Vision is dialoguing with Brian Atwood, John Charlick, and Tim Worth on these issues. NGO representatives are now accompanying USAID officials on various missions. Practically, parallel tracks are at work: the personal/spiritual and the administrative. World Vision emphasizes the importance of ensuring

that the people who wrestle with these personal issues are supported; at a minimum this includes having access to places and communication mechanisms where political and religious differences can be set aside (i.e., networks of reconciliation). Such ideas need to be worked into the system and documented for supporting reference.