

USAID Developments

VOLUME 2, No. 1 / FALL 1995

Seattle hosts first environmental Lessons Without Borders

Some participants were openly skeptical when they arrived on the first day of the Lessons Without Borders conference in Seattle. One person admitted that he could not imagine that the indigenous people of the Gulf coast of Honduras had anything to share about the environment or resource management with the native American tribes of the Pacific Northwest.

Managers of the Pike Place Market were convinced that they had much to teach about managing a public market but did not guess that

they would glean valuable insight about recycling from people who managed similar markets in the developing world. Washington State officials did not expect that representatives from far poorer countries than our own could help guide them toward a more efficient model for solid waste disposal. But Lessons Without Borders is often full of surprises.

From April 17-20, USAID, the city of Seattle and the Alliance for a Global Community co-sponsored Lessons Without Borders, organized with the help of a local host

committee. The event focused on "Community Development and the Environment" and was the first "Lessons" to include representatives from USAID and Alliance field missions overseas. Participating were 26 international development professionals from 16 countries, including Belize, Bulgaria, Egypt, Ecuador, Indonesia, Mali, the Philippines, Russia and Zimbabwe, along with 250 local representatives.

Five teams were assembled to address issues that affect building a sustainable environment: natural
(continued on page 2)

The U.S. Agency for International Development launched the Lessons Without Borders program last year to introduce techniques used overseas to help solve some of the social and economic problems that America faces here at home.

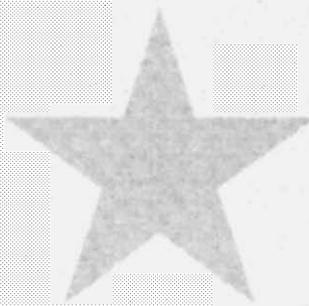
"For over 30 years, USAID has worked in countries where the conditions are often far less manageable than here at home. . . . Yet we can learn some valuable lessons from those who struggle in the margins," USAID Administrator Brian Atwood said in the keynote address to the Annual Conference of International City/County Managers Association, held in Denver in September.

"Lessons Without Borders is about bringing some of our best practices to bear on America's most pressing problems," Atwood said. "It gives us a chance to share experience from domestic and international programs - to find out what works best and develop cost-effective remedies to common problems," he added.

To date, there have been three "Lessons" conferences. Programs have been held in Baltimore, Boston and Seattle, each with its own unique approach.

This issue of "USAID Developments" provides an update on the follow-up activities in the three host cities.

At the agency's annual awards ceremony in July, Rep. Donald Payne (D-N.J.) received USAID's first Domestic Partnership Award from Administrator Brian Atwood (left). In his acceptance speech, Rep. Payne requested that Newark, N.J., be considered as a future location for Lessons Without Borders.



UNITED STATES AGENCY
FOR INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

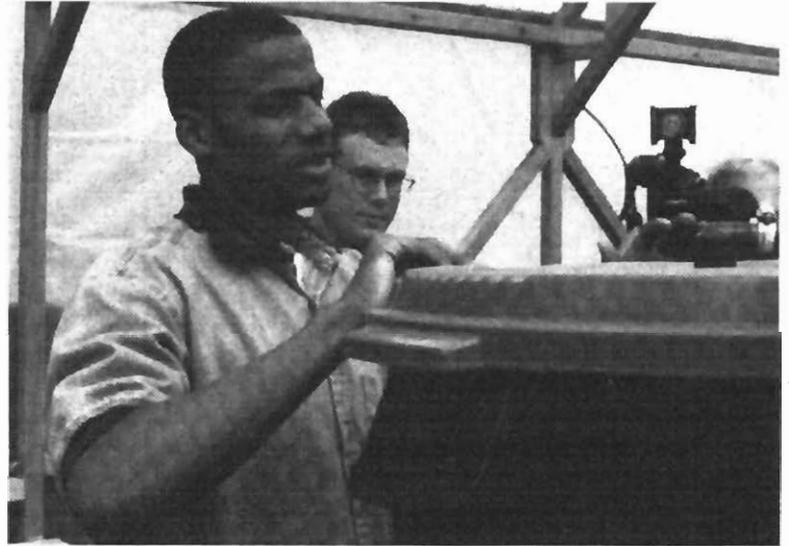
“When you speak about the problems of natural resource management by indigenous peoples, you may cross borders but you are still addressing the same issues.”

(continued from page 1)
resource management; indigenous involvement; pollution prevention; community empowerment; and urban sustainability. Each team was composed of local residents and community development workers, Seattle-based environmental experts and international development practitioners. Teams traveled to sites in western Washington and neighborhoods in Seattle for two days and observed projects that specifically addressed their teams' issues.

One of the natural resource management teams brought together representatives from indigenous groups in four countries – the United States, Nicaragua, the Philippines and the Russian Federation. Over the course of their three days together, they shared experiences (often through translators) about their natural resource management systems, their cultural and spiritual connection to the natural world, their struggles for land tenure security and their search for economic opportunities that also enable them to preserve their cultural identity.

“Traditions and concerns for the environment are still alive in all these peoples and are part of what defines them as indigenous peoples,” said Margaret Duncan, who works with Washington state's Suquamish Tribe, which hosted the team. “Clearly, these people understand that their long-term survival as indigenous cultures depends on the preservation of their natural resources through land tenure security and local management of natural resources.”

Participants agreed that the issues of land tenure and local management of natural resources were the most critical problems facing indigenous peoples around the world. Fidencio Davis, the territorial



A student at Cleveland High School demonstrates to members of the Urban Sustainability team how Seattle's Fish and Roses program operates a successful urban recycling project.

mayor of a group of villages of the Mayangna Sumu in Nicaragua, recounted his peoples' continuing struggle to attain control over the forests they call home as farmers and gold miners moved into the area clearing trees and polluting rivers.

From the Russian Far East, Udege tribesman Pavel Sulyandziga told a similar story of increasing pressure on indigenous peoples to relinquish control of their ancestral homeland so that vital commodities, such as oil, gold and timber can be extracted and sold on world markets.

In the Philippines, indigenous peoples often reside in the few original forests that remain in the country and face increasing encroachment by outsiders to harvest the old growth remnants of this once richly forested island archipelago. And even the Suquamish of Washington, who have had treaties with a Western culture for over a century, are still struggling to maintain their rights to local fish and shellfish resources.

“When you speak about the problems of natural resource management by indigenous peoples,

you may cross borders but you are still addressing the same issues. I learned that we are talking about the same problems,” said Pat Dugan from the USAID mission in the Philippines.

Teams came together on the last day of the week's activities for a panel presentation to local business, government and media leaders. Seattle Mayor Norm Rice opened the meeting by explaining, “Issues like protecting and promoting our environment do not know boundaries and borders. Our problems do not fit into neat little packages or neighborhoods or districts. And neither do the solutions.” Moderated by USAID Deputy Administrator Carol Lancaster, the panel led to an extended debate about the role of government regulations, businesses and community groups in addressing community development and environmental issues.

by Paul Fleming, consultant for Lessons Without Borders in Seattle, with input from Dan Whyner, environmental analyst at USAID/Washington

Kenya program prompts Baltimore to make changes to improve health and lending services

The city of Baltimore continues to be at the vanguard of Lessons Without Borders since Vice President Gore launched the USAID initiative at Morgan State University in June 1994. With the support of Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke and the Chesapeake Health Plan Foundation, more than 300 Baltimore community activists and social service professionals now include themselves in the "Lessons" network. As this partnership continues to flourish, it has reinforced the basic notion that community health and economic development at the individual level are deeply intertwined.

The Baltimore program enlisted the core participation of four organizations: Baltimore's Health Department, Women Entrepreneurs of Baltimore (WEB), the Council on Economic and Business Opportunities (CEBO) and Healthy Start. Among the follow-up activities undertaken within the past year were trips by nine Baltimore professionals to USAID projects in Kenya and Jamaica to examine the links between health and economic growth. In debriefing sessions after these trips, participants enthusiastically noted they had observed approaches—both innovative and traditional—that they believed would effectively address challenges faced by Baltimore.

Amanda Crook, chief executive officer of WEB, traveled to Kenya and visited Pride Kenya, a non-governmental organization that operates a peer-lending program, a

financing system in which very low-income people pool their money and lend it to each other for business purposes. Crook wanted to learn how to apply peer-lending programs to an urban setting.

She observed that in Africa, group loan guarantees are reinforced by village societies, encouraging high levels of loan repayment and offering an informal support system.

Crook's Baltimore organization, WEB, helps women who would not normally qualify for credit to start their own businesses. Prompted by the Kenya visit, and working with the Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA), WEB put together its first peer-lending group. The American National Savings Bank has provided interest-bearing free checking. In

addition, savings accounts have been set up for the first group of peer-loan recipients.

The initial group of loan recipients includes nine women. "We are very proud of this program," said Crook. "The members of the group come from diverse backgrounds, and their businesses range from catering, to bartering and trading services, to family day care and women's casual wear. They are also dedicated to each other, supporting each other as women working together to reach their goals."

Another Kenyan delegate, Daisy Morris, director of operations for Healthy Start, examined family health care delivery and innovations in family planning. Healthy Start, a quasi-public agency that is dedicated

(continued on page 4)



In Machakos, Kenya, participants in USAID-funded Pride Kenya programs talk to a member of the Baltimore LWOB delegation about how their lives have improved since becoming involved in microenterprise lending programs.

... in Africa, group loan guarantees are reinforced by village societies, encouraging high levels of loan repayment and offering an informal support system.

“When you work in community programs, it always helps to see other programs in action, ask questions and share common problems and experiences.”

(continued from page 3)

to reducing infant mortality rates in Baltimore, attributes some of its successes in the field to its willingness to use community outreach workers to involve pregnant women in their program and to get fathers more involved in pre-natal care and early childhood development.

On her return from Kenya, Morris noted that in the United States men often become involved in family planning decisions after a woman becomes pregnant. In Kenya, Morris witnessed programs where fathers were intimately involved in all stages of family planning. Kenyan men help decide about contraception and child spacing.

As a result of the Kenyan study

Kenya program is immunization model

Baltimore participants on the Kenya study tour had observed Kenya's expanded program on immunization, which uses social mobilization techniques to increase immunization rates. Using similar techniques, the city of Baltimore recently conducted a massive immunization catch-up program where health workers successfully immunized 35,000 school-age children who had been missed in previous outreach efforts.

tour, Healthy Start is now committed to including health education and treatment services for men. To accomplish this goal, Healthy Start is working with Total Health Care Inc. of Baltimore's Community Health Center to incorporate on-site men's health education and treatment services.

“When you work in community programs, it always helps to see

other programs in action, ask questions and share common problems and experiences,” Morris commented. “This reinforces ideas, breaks down misconceptions of a project not being able to be successful and reinvigorates your commitment to success.”

by Nyka Jasper, public liaison officer, USAID/Washington

For more information on USAID...

The Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE) serves as the institutional memory for the U.S. Agency for International Development. CDIE maintains a database of more than 90,000 USAID-funded program and project documents.

CDIE is also organized to provide interested individuals and organizations outside USAID with access to its database. Please contact CDIE through the Development Information Services Clearinghouse to order specific documents or the Development Information Center for general information.

The Development Information Services Clearinghouse is the repository of USAID's database on USAID-funded programs and projects. If you know the identification number of the document you would like to obtain, you may order it directly from the DISC. The document identification begins with the letters PN- or PD-. There is a charge for some publications. Address for the clearinghouse is 1611 Kent Street, Suite 200, Arlington, Va. 22209-2111. Phone, (703) 351-4006; fax (703) 351-4039. Internet address: docorder@disc.mhs.compuserve.com

The Development Information Center maintains reference materials and microfiche access to USAID documents. For general information about USAID or to get order numbers for documents, contact the Development Information Center, formerly known as the A.I.D. Library. Reference librarians assist customers Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The center is located at 1601 N. Kent Street, Room 105, Rosslyn, Va. The mailing address is PPC/CDIE/DI, SA-18, Room 105, USAID, Washington, D.C. 20523-1801. Phone: (703) 875-4818; fax: (703) 875-5269.

LWOB WEB IS SPINNING
The Lessons Without Borders program will soon inaugurate its own page on the World Wide Web of the Internet. Eventually, the LWOB page will include project summaries, press releases, a newsletter on LWOB developments and active links to LWOB partners in cities throughout the United States and USAID missions.
Watch for the activation of the LWOB page on the USAID web page (www.info.usaid.gov).

Community health workers: Why not here?

Nearly one year after its inception, Boston's Lessons Without Borders has established the Community Health Exchange Program, which is coordinated by USAID and Management Sciences for Health (MSH), an international health agency that works with public and private health care organizations around the world. This new program will examine the role of the community outreach worker in the United States and foster an exchange of ideas and experience with other countries.

"The U.S. professional medical community has been reluctant to recognize that community residents without academic training can be certified to provide outreach services and health education," said Judith Kurland, former Boston commissioner of health and hospitals and consultant to Lessons Without Borders. Some developing countries already select, train and supervise outreach workers who take on a central role in health education.

In Massachusetts there are numerous programs that train and employ community outreach workers for a variety of services, including prenatal education for high-risk pregnant women, HIV/AIDS education and cancer screening and evaluation. These programs offer limited opportunities to exchange ideas about training, supervising and evaluating community outreach workers. The Community Health Exchange Program will foster communication among community outreach workers, trainers and

supervisors both within Massachusetts and internationally.

Under the Community Health Exchange Program, MSH hosts monthly seminars to examine and discuss how community outreach programs are implemented in developing countries and the United States. In July, Nils Daulaire, USAID's senior policy adviser for health, spoke to representatives from the Boston health care community on how community health workers are used in developing countries. Abu Sayeed, director of the Local Initiatives Program (LIP), a nationwide family planning program in Bangladesh, also spoke to local agencies.

LIP, in collaboration with Bangladesh's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, trains family planning staff and local leaders to manage their own programs. Funded by USAID, LIP uses more than 28,000 community-based volunteers to expand family planning services to reach the many Bangladeshi couples who lack



Donna Shalala, secretary of Health and Human Services, helped kick off the Boston Lessons Without Borders conference last October.

either information or easy access to services.

"While LIP may be uniquely Bangladeshi in some aspects, the discussion was a clear indication of the opportunity to apply international approaches to settings in which we work daily," commented Jennifer Cochran, director of the Massachusetts Office of Refugee and Immigrant Health.

The October 1994 Boston Lessons Without Borders conference focused on childhood immunization, community empowerment, microenterprise, public-private partnerships and education. International projects in each of these areas were presented to over 200 community leaders, health and social service providers, academics and policy-makers. As a result of the conference, participants developed a set of recommendations focusing on the importance of community-driven initiatives and the value of learning from other countries about community-based approaches.

MSH has established an advisory committee composed of 10 agencies—including representatives from USAID, the Massachusetts Office of Refugee and Immigrant Health, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the departments of health for the cities of Boston and Chelsea—to manage the seminar series and organize international study tours in selected developing countries when funding becomes available.

- by Gail Price, technical associate, Management Sciences for Health

The Community Health Exchange Program will foster communication among community outreach workers, trainers and supervisors both within Massachusetts and internationally.

Upcoming Events

Call (202) 647-1850 for details.

December 1995 **Washington, D.C.**

Spring 1996 **Atlanta, Ga.**

June 1996 **Baltimore, Md.**

National Conference on Lessons Without Borders, in collaboration with the cities of Baltimore, Boston and Seattle. This symposium will bring together all "Lessons" participants from past and prospective host cities to exchange the lessons learned as a result of USAID's national initiative.

Seattle may look to Cairo for recycling guidance

In Seattle, it was a surprise to many that Pike's Market, the largest generator of organic waste in the city, did not recycle that waste. Participants in the Seattle Lessons Without Borders conference suggested that U.S. managers turn to Cairo, Egypt, for two models of successful organic waste management. For more information on Cairo's water and waste water programs, contact Alvin Newman, director, Urban Administration and Development Office, USAID/Cairo, Unit #64902, APO AE 09839-4902, phone number 20-2-354-8211. Or contact Ezzat Guindy, assistant director for public relations, Association for the Protection of the Environment, P.O. Box 32 Qula, Cairo, Egypt, phone number 20-2-511-3670. The Board of Directors' annual report is available on the waste water program.

Participation: A common theme

Whether in Boston or Bamako, or whether your project focuses on treating infectious diseases or jumpstarting local microenterprises, participation of stakeholders is essential. The importance of participation is one of the clearest messages in all Lessons Without Borders activities. USAID has vast and ever-increasing experience in participatory development. For more information, contact Diane LaVoy at her E-mail address: DLAVOY@USAID.GOV.



U.S. Agency for International Development
Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs
Washington, DC 20523-0056

Bulk Rate
Postage and Fees Paid
USAID
Permit No. G-107

**Assistant Administrator for
Legislative and Public Affairs:**
Jill Buckley

Chief of Multimedia Communications:
Suzanne H. Chase

Editor: Victoria Jaffe

Gopher address: gopher.info.usaid.gov
Web page address: www.info.usaid.gov
phone: (202) 647-1850