

USAID Developments

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Leland Initiative connects Africa to the information highway

To help African nations gain access to the information highway, Vice President Al Gore and USAID Administrator Brian Atwood launched the Leland Initiative at a ceremony on June 5 at the Old Executive Office Building in Washington.

Named for Rep. Mickey Leland, founder of the House Select Committee on Hunger who was killed in a plane crash during a food relief mission to Ethiopia in 1989, the Leland Initiative will provide 20 African nations with access to the Internet. By enhancing the ability of

Africans to access, produce and use information, this project will place powerful tools at their fingertips.

With strong support from Gore, the five-year, \$15 million USAID program will be one of the main elements connecting Africa to the global information highway.

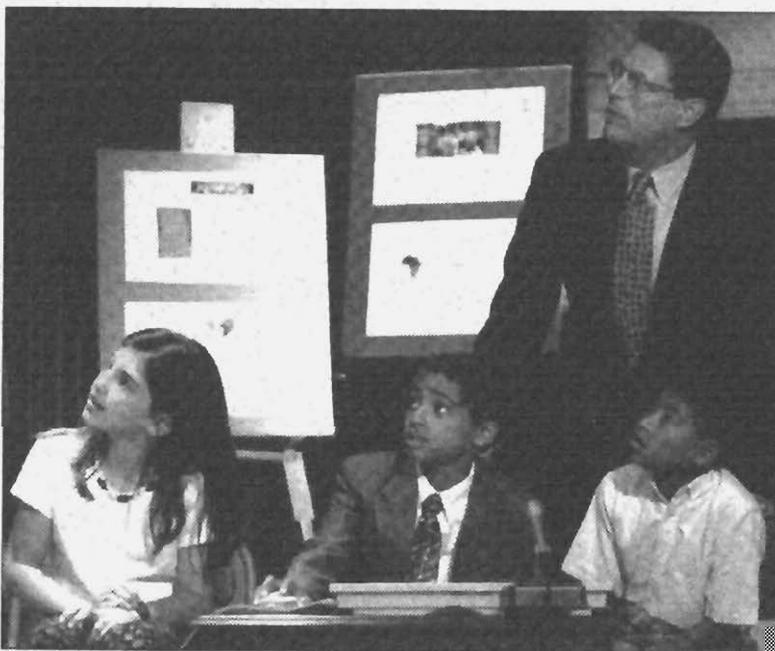
The Internet's ability to speedily transmit and exchange information provides a strategic resource for all countries, regardless of their levels of development. Africa remains the last region of the world with minimal connections to telecommunications.

The Leland Initiative will accel-

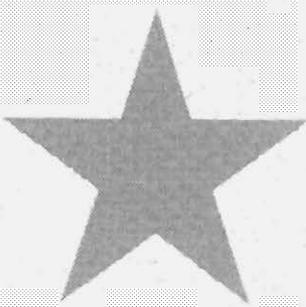
erate and bolster sustainable development efforts in African nations by helping them to help themselves. For example:

- With accurate and up-to-date market information, factory managers are better able to plan and contribute to overall economic growth in their region.
- Village health workers can acquire instant medical diagnosis and advice from distant capitals.
- Schoolchildren and their teachers can reach beyond their classroom to unlimited information sources and real life exchanges available through the Internet.
- Democracy becomes reinforced as citizens communicate interests and reactions to policies among themselves and to their government representatives.
- Potential food shortages, drought and other broad environmental emergencies are more easily overcome when governments and relief workers have reliable, readily accessible information.

USAID, in cooperation with technicians from NASA, the U.S. Navy, the State Department and the private sector, has begun country-by-country design and installation of Internet service in Africa.



Vice President Gore looks on as Jarrett Leland (center) and two friends participate in a demonstration interacting with Ghanaian schoolchildren through the Internet.



UNITED STATES AGENCY
FOR INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

USAID public affairs resources

USAID encourages readers to use agency resources to better understand our foreign assistance programs.

Unless otherwise noted, publications and videos can be obtained by writing to USAID, Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs, Public Inquiries, Washington, D.C. 20523-0056.

Publications:

- *Why Foreign Aid?**. Eight-page handout, outlines USAID's mission and summarizes benefits of America's foreign aid programs to developing nations as well as the United States.

- *USAID: In the National Interest*. Short brochure about USAID's purpose and programs.

- *Center for Trade and Investment Services**. Short brochure about USAID's information center for the U.S. business community. The center can be reached toll free by calling 1-800-872-4348 or in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area at 202-663-2660.

- *1995 Agency Performance Report**. 32-page evaluation of USAID's effort to achieve its five development goals: promoting broad-based economic growth, advancing democracy, stabilizing population and protecting human health, encouraging sound environmental management and providing humanitarian and transition assistance.

- *USAID Developments*. USAID's quarterly external newsletter.

- *On Track**. USAID's monthly reengineering digest. Please call 202-663-2110 to be added to the mailing list. Internet address: OTRACK@IRT@AIDW.

- *State-by-state reports**. Close to 80 percent of USAID's contracts and grants go directly to American firms. These reports list contracts and grants by state.

Videos:

- *Global Connections*. An overview of USAID programs, describing USAID's strategic priorities and how the U.S. commitment to developing countries has benefited Americans by creating new markets, exports and jobs. Available in 12- or 21-minute versions. The 12-minute version is currently circulating in U.S. high schools, along with a one-page study guide. A one-minute public service announcement, posted on the agency's web page, is also available.

- *Foreign Aid: Doing the Right Thing*. The first of four videos explaining how Americans benefit from a world made safer and more healthy through the foreign assistance program. By helping developing countries fight disease, overpopulation and environmental degradation, the United States also benefits. Length: 8 minutes.

- *Doing It Right*. Answers common questions about foreign aid. Illustrates successful USAID programs in three countries "graduating" from U.S. foreign aid—Costa Rica, the Czech Republic and Botswana. Length: 14:45 minutes.

- *Leland Initiative*. Covers the launching of the Leland Initiative at the Old Executive Office Building in Washington on June 5, 1996. The initiative, named for former Rep. Mickey Leland and funded by USAID, will bring 20 African nations

on the Internet. Vice President Al Gore, USAID Administrator Brian Atwood and Allison Briscoe, former wife of Rep. Leland, are featured speakers. Length: 6 minutes.

- *Foreign Aid: The Business Connection*. How does foreign assistance create markets for American goods? How does helping people expand their food supply, improve their lives and preserve their environment affect American jobs? The video profiles companies such as General Motors in Michigan, Arbor Acres in Connecticut, Oil Mop Inc. in Louisiana and Aladan in Alabama, which owe a large percentage of their profits to exports. Depicts the connection between business and U.S. assistance. Length: 15 minutes.

- *Upcoming videos*. Three short videos will be available that highlight USAID's work in Africa, the agency's Lessons Without Borders initiative and the agency's partnership with the business community.

Internet:

- *USAID's Web Page*. Includes speeches, testimonies, op-eds, editorials, press releases and polling information. Other features include a map with state-by-state breakdowns of USAID-awarded contracts and grants, a section on how to do business with USAID and menus with information on USAID's regional and sectoral activities. Internet address: www.info.usaid.gov

* *Publication is available on USAID's web page, www.info.usaid.gov.*

“Model” USAID agreement in Maine

On May 20, Maine Gov. Angus King presided at a cooperative agreement signing between the state of Maine and USAID in the State House in Augusta.

This agreement—the first of its kind for USAID—establishes Maine as a “model” USAID business outreach center. The agreement provides Maine’s firms access to: USAID’s extensive procurement database; technical support for business conferences and workshops; foreign government and commercial contacts; and USAID field missions through which to market Maine products, expertise and services.

“This is a real coup for Maine,” King said. “With 95 percent of the world’s consumers residing outside North America’s borders and with modern telecommunications making a business’ location less relevant, Maine can compete with anyone, anywhere.

Through this agreement with USAID, Maine’s window on the world just got a lot bigger.”

John Wilkinson, who represented USAID at the ceremony, described the arrangement as “a great cooperative effort that will help bring Maine busi-

nesses in contact with a much wider potential market in 87 [USAID-staffed] countries overseas.”

USAID is looking for other states as partners for similar agreements and plans to expand the program as matches are made.



Maine Gov. Angus King (right) discusses the importance of the new agreement with USAID's John Wilkinson.

U.S. business community rallies to support foreign aid

On June 24, the Business Alliance for International Economic Development released a report titled “Foreign Assistance: What’s in it for Americans?” The alliance is a recently formed coalition of trade associates supportive of U.S. development assistance.

According to George Burrill, chairman of the alliance, “Exports to the developing world are growing immensely...The Business Alliance has been founded to assist with informing business and the wider American public

about the correlation between properly implemented foreign economic assistance and the expansion of U.S. exports and jobs. Corporate executives understand the importance of economic development assistance in the long-term creation of market opportunities—especially those that will result in U.S. exports rather than those of our competitors.”

An excerpt from the report looks ahead: “By the year 2000, four out of five people in the world will live in developing countries. If current eco-

nommic growth rates in, say, Africa are sustained—and if we continue our modest assistance programs to that continent—the United States could export \$50 billion worth of goods and services each year to Africa alone by the year 2025. In constant dollars, this is almost three times what we export today, and it represents over a million future jobs for Americans. Put another way, it could mean a return of \$600 per American family. If we could help Africans achieve even more dramatic growth, the return to each family could reach \$2000 annually.”

“Corporate executives understand the importance of economic development assistance in the long-term creation of market opportunities ...”

Spotlight on Maryland and Michigan

The principal beneficiary of America's foreign assistance programs has always been the United States. Close to 80 percent of USAID's contracts and grants go directly to U.S. firms, organizations and institutions.

In addition to helping developing countries, foreign assistance programs have helped the United States by creating major markets for agricultural goods, new markets for industrial exports and hundreds of thousands of jobs for Americans.

Two examples of states benefiting from the U.S. foreign aid program.

Maryland

In fiscal year 1995, USAID provided more than \$359 million in grants and contracts to Maryland.

In 1995, USAID boosted Maryland's agriculture by purchasing about \$3.2 million of wheat, soybeans, sorghum and other agricultural products for use in food aid programs.

The shipping and handling of USAID's food and other aid generated more than \$7 million in port charges and other fees for companies headquartered in Maryland.

USAID helped strengthen higher education in Maryland in 1994 by sponsoring training, usually including full tuition and living allowances, for 889 foreign participants in Maryland's universities and educational facilities. The 1995 program sponsored 820 students.

USAID programs in Egypt and Jordan financed over \$65 million in purchases from Maryland companies in fiscal year 1993; over \$1.5 million in fiscal year 1994; and nearly \$2 million in fiscal year 1995.

Michigan

In fiscal year 1995, USAID provided \$45.3 million in grants and contracts to Michigan.

USAID helped Michigan agriculture by purchasing about \$21.5 million of wheat, sorghum, soybeans

and edible oils for use in food aid programs in 1993. In 1995, USAID purchased an estimated \$5.6 million in bean products to feed people in Honduras, Bosnia, Rwanda, Liberia and Burundi.

In 1994, USAID sponsored 195 foreign participants' training, usually including full tuition and living allowances, at Michigan universities and educational facilities. The 1995 program sponsored 109 students.

In fiscal year 1993, USAID programs in Egypt, Jordan and Mozambique financed \$8 million in purchases from Michigan companies; \$5.6 million in purchases in fiscal year 1994; and \$5.9 million in fiscal year 1995.

Among the companies benefiting from USAID purchases were Brown Machine Division; Burr Oak Tool & Gauge Co.; Detroit Diesel Allison International; General Motors Corp.; Intraco Corp.; Ford Motor Co.; Livernois Engineering Co.; and Stryker.



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