

# USAID Developments

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## Focus on Lessons Without Borders

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

**- J. Brian Atwood,  
USAID Administrator**

**T**he U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) started the Lessons Without Borders (LWOB) program in 1994 to bring home lessons learned in more than 30 years of work in international development worldwide.

Since the program was launched by Vice President Al Gore and USAID Administrator J. Brian Atwood in Baltimore, a number of initiatives in Baltimore, Boston, Seattle, Washington, D.C., and Alaska have served as catalysts in linking the best practices in health,

the environment, housing, education and small business development overseas with those here at home. Through conferences, workshops, fact-finding trips and information exchanges, interna-

tional models have been adapted to address domestic problems with impressive results. This edition of USAID Developments focuses on some of the highlights of the LWOB program.

### Lessons Without Borders Program Wins Hammer Award

Lessons Without Borders was recently awarded Vice President Gore's prestigious Hammer Award, given to innovative government programs that improve the way services are delivered to communities while also reducing costs. The award was granted for Lessons Without Borders programs in two cities — Baltimore and Boston. Both programs exemplify the National Performance Review's goals of building public-private partnerships, cutting red tape and streamlining bureaucratic controls.

In Baltimore, recipients of the Hammer Award included the city of Baltimore, the Chesapeake Health Plan Foundation and several organizations dedicated to

addressing health and economic development problems in the city, including Healthy Start/Baltimore and Women Entrepreneurs of Baltimore (WEB). In Boston, USAID formed a partnership with Management Sciences for Health (MSH), an international health agency based in the city that works with public and private health care organizations around the world. The Massachusetts state government's Office of Immigrant and Refugee Health, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Cabot Family Foundation played a key role in planning and funding a welfare-to-work training program based on a USAID model in Bangladesh.



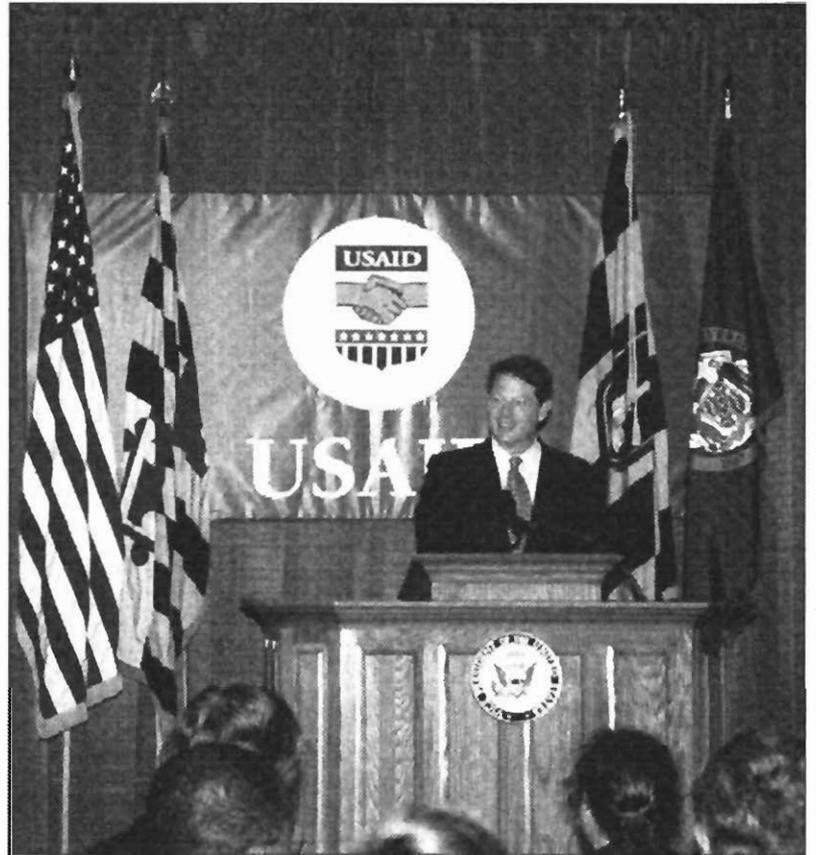
UNITED STATES AGENCY  
FOR INTERNATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

## From Baltimore to.....

**P**erhaps no U.S. community has benefited more from USAID's overseas experiences than the city of Baltimore. Mayor Kurt Schmoke, with the help of the Chesapeake Health Plan Foundation, Johns Hopkins University and Catholic Relief Services, has engaged front-line development professionals from a number of Baltimore city agencies in learning valuable lessons from international programs. Fact-finding trips by these professionals to Kenya, Jamaica and, most recently, Bangladesh have resulted in a number of innovative adaptations that are benefiting Baltimore residents.

By adopting social marketing techniques from Kenya, immunization rates are up from 62 percent to 96 percent in Baltimore. A community program from Kingston, Jamaica, is influencing violence prevention and family planning programs carried out by the Baltimore Healthy Start Men's Services program.

Another program that has dramatically affected the lives of many women in Baltimore is the savings and loan program of Women Entrepreneurs of Baltimore (WEB), which began shortly after WEB's chief executive, Amanda Crook Zinn, visited the USAID mission in Kenya. Prompted by her visit to Pride Kenya, a peer-lending program in which very low-income people pool their money and lend to each other for business purposes, Zinn began working with the Washington, D.C.-based Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA) to adapt a similar program to the urban



*Vice President Al Gore helped launch Lessons Without Borders in Baltimore in 1994. He has remained a strong supporter of the program.*

setting in which WEB operates.

In June 1995, WEB established the WEB/FINCA Savings and Lending Program, which has funded four self-employment associations — each a group of five to 10 women who decide who in that group can borrow money and how much. There are 28 members involved currently. Forty-four loans totaling \$52,500 have been made with a 100 percent repayment rate — something no bank can claim.

The program includes not only business loans, but a savings compo-

nent and technical assistance. It serves as a tremendous resource for WEB participants, helping them improve their cash flow and increase their assets, while providing support and advice from other business owners and professionals.

**By adopting social marketing techniques from Kenya, immunization rates are up from 62 percent to 96 percent in Baltimore.**

# Bangladesh to.....

**N**ot many Americans know much about Bangladesh, a country the size of Wisconsin with a population of 126 million. It is one of the poorest countries in the world, with an annual per capita income of \$240. Yet, surprisingly, it has been the source of many of the lessons being adapted by U.S. development professionals involved in Lessons Without Borders. The Bangladesh Local Initiatives Project (LIP) is a highly effective community-based family planning program that relies on community volunteers to provide basic family planning services to the rural population under the supervision of paid community health workers. Very different adaptations of the LIP model are having remarkable results in two urban centers in the United States.

For example, in Baltimore, Morgan State University won a two-year grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to launch a major child immunization and oral rehydration therapy (ORT) project in the inner cities of Baltimore, Md., and Norfolk, Va.

The project will hire mothers to perform much of the community outreach work. The primary recipients will be 225 low-income families with pre-school children. With the help of the newly trained "community-based health resource mothers," these families will learn how to use ORT to stop or prevent their children's diarrhea problems and be able to understand the importance of immunization in fighting common childhood diseases.

The LIP program also had an impact on Boston where the Community Health Volunteer Project, adapted from LIP by Management

Sciences for Health (MSH), has resulted in 31 volunteers integrating into 10 community health agencies where they are providing information, education and communication support services. Virtually all volunteers have reported that their volunteer experience has been a turning point in their lives, increasing their self-respect and raising their hopes for the future. Twenty of the 31 volunteers were welfare recipients, nine of whom found paid employment as a result of their involvement in the program.

In September 1997 community development professionals from Baltimore and Boston embarked on a tour of USAID's activities in Bangladesh. The delegation observed LIP and other programs firsthand and discussed how they could be implemented back home in their own communities. Much like previous expeditions to USAID/Kenya and USAID/Jamaica in 1994 and 1995, respectively, the Bangladesh trip included health and microenterprise

professionals who were interested in seeing how international programs operate and how they measure their effectiveness and sustainability.

The first phase of the program was made possible by funding from the Rockefeller Foundation and the Cabot Family Foundation. MSH is currently seeking funds to expand the program nationwide.

Participating in the latest trip to Bangladesh were a number of community-based, non-profit organizations including Women Entrepreneurs of Baltimore (WEB), Healthy Start/Baltimore, Project HEAL and Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD). The Chesapeake Health Plan Foundation awarded the city of Baltimore its second grant of \$55,000 to enable representatives from WEB, Healthy Start and Project HEAL to travel to Bangladesh. John Snow Inc., Management Sciences for Health and Pathfinder International sponsored ABCD participants.



*A rural potter, who obtained credit through USAID's Women Entrepreneurship Development Program, expounds on the virtues of microcredit and shows off her skills to Baltimore visitors (foreground, left to right) Kate Tulenko, Maxine Reed-Vance, Tanya Johnson and Kave Goddard as Raka Rashid of USAID/Bangladesh's food security team translates.*

# Creating Linkages in Rural America

**W**hile much of the focus of LWOB programs has been on problems of America's inner cities, the lion's share of USAID's overseas programs focuses on the particular challenges of rural poverty and health issues. Therefore, it was only natural for USAID to initiate an LWOB program in rural America.

Earlier this year, USAID participated in a rural development conference in Anchorage, Alaska, at which USAID's Community Involvement in Management of Environmental Pollution (CIMEP) model was presented to Alaskan state officials. Through CIMEP, municipal officials, community groups and local non-governmental organizations learn skills to work together to identify and solve environmental health problems and develop community-level solutions to them.

CIMEP draws on USAID's long experience in promoting participatory methods for managing water and sanitation systems worldwide. This approach has been applied in numerous countries including Ecuador, Bolivia, Tunisia, Zambia and Benin. Alaska plans to adapt the CIMEP model and train government and community leaders to help address environmental health problems in some of Alaska's more remote villages. Alaska Gov. Tony Knowles noted, "It is a wise use of [USAID's] well-trained professionals to bring some of their expertise home to help address compelling issues within the states." He added that "USAID's energetic championing

of this issue was the catalyst that enabled the project to go forward."

The site of the second rural LWOB program is Knoxville, Tenn., in November 1997. USAID programs in developing countries address the same problems that are being faced in some parts of Appalachia. Whether it be microfinance, rural enterprise, employment creation or fostering women leaders, USAID has sought to create sustainable solutions in developing countries in the same

manner that local Appalachian organizations are seeking sustainable solutions in their work in community development. By highlighting similarities between the work of development practitioners in rural enterprise both overseas and in Appalachia, the Lessons Without Borders program in Knoxville will create a platform for the exchange of common experiences in rural development.

**USAID programs in developing countries address the same problems that are being faced in some parts of Appalachia.**

## About Our Appalachian Partners

- The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is a unique federal-state partnership whose mission is to serve as an advocate for the people of Appalachia and to foster the development of dynamic and self-sustaining economies.
- The Community Partnership Center (CPC) at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, is an interdisciplinary center that links university faculty and students with groups rooted in urban and rural low-income communities to work collaboratively to solve social and economic problems.
- The Institute of Agriculture at the University of Tennessee was established in 1869 as part of the nation's land-grant system. Today it continues to fulfill its threefold mission of teaching, research and public service through four main divisions: the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources; the Agricultural Experiment Station; the Agricultural Extension Service; and the College of Veterinary Medicine. In 1985 the institute established an Office of International Programs for Agriculture and Natural Resources.
- The University of Kentucky Appalachian Center is dedicated to teaching, research and service in eastern Kentucky and the rest of the Appalachian region.
- The East Tennessee Foundation is a community-based foundation serving 19 counties of east Tennessee with a mission to enrich the quality of life in east Tennessee by encouraging wide-ranging philanthropy and the development of a pool of endowment funds to be used for the good of the region and its people.
- The Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED) provides opportunities and resources to help citizens build healthy, sustainable, equitable, democratic and prosperous communities in Kentucky and Central Appalachia.
- Brushy Fork Institute at Berea College works to encourage local effective, ethical leadership in Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.
- The Tennessee Valley Authority, a federal corporation, is the nation's largest electricity producer and a major force for regional economic development in the Tennessee River Basin.

# What's Next for Lessons Without Borders?

**S**eeking to continue the promising first steps of the Lessons Without Borders program, efforts are being made to create an LWOB Foundation, a non-partisan, non-profit organization that will act as the primary administrator for the programs described in this issue of USAID Developments. The foundation's financial goal is to raise \$10 million over a five-year period to carry out three essential activities:

- First, the foundation would leverage public and private capital and resources to expand the successful efforts by U.S. communities to implement innovative community health and development

projects based on international models.

- Second, an exchange fund for professionals would be created to enable community leaders and activists to observe firsthand successful international programs, test and share information and learn how programs operate.
- Finally, a small amount of funding would be dedicated to continuing to convene conferences that have proved useful in catalyzing communication and sharing lessons between international and domestic development practitioners.

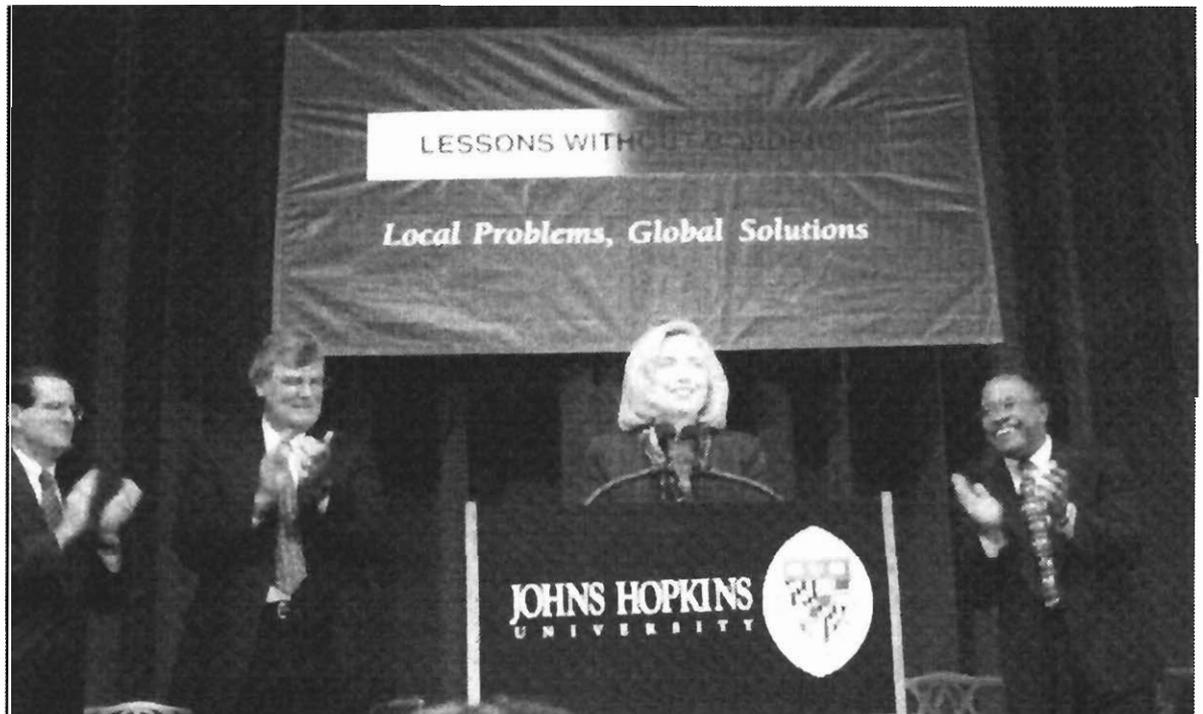
The LWOB Foundation would include a small staff to facilitate the

administration of programs. The foundation would be governed by a board of directors and a program committee, which would assist with fundraising, provide overall policy direction and monitor all existing and future projects.

For more information on LWOB, contact Keri Smith, USAID, Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs, Washington, D.C. 20523.

#### Future Lessons Without Borders conferences include:

- Women in Development
- Sustainable Communities
- Housing
- Youth



First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton receives a warm welcome at the September 1996 national LWOB conference in Baltimore from (left to right) Johns Hopkins President William Brody, USAID Administrator Brian Atwood and Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke.

# Spotlight on Kentucky and Tennessee

**T**he 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 for work overseas.

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 assistance program:

## Kentucky

USAID grants and contracts in Kentucky totaled \$226,611 at the end of fiscal year 1995, with an additional \$78,111 added during fiscal year 1996.

In 1993, USAID purchased about \$11.8 million of Kentucky wheat, feed-

grains and soybeans for use in food aid programs.

In 1994, USAID sponsored 311 foreign participants' training at Kentucky universities and educational facilities, usually including full tuition and living allowances. The 1995 program sponsored 169 students, and the 1996 program, 171 students.

A separate USAID program in Egypt financed \$710,000 in purchases from Louisville Drying Machinery in fiscal year 1993 and \$21,371 of purchases from Valvoline International in fiscal year 1994.

## Tennessee

USAID grants and contracts in Tennessee from Oct. 1, 1995, to Sept. 30, 1996, totaled \$2.7 million.

In 1993, USAID purchased about \$5.1 million of Tennessee wheat, cotton, soybeans and other agricultural products for use in Food for Peace programs. In 1994, USAID purchased an

estimated \$26.2 million of agricultural products for use in food aid programs. In 1995, USAID purchased an estimated \$34.7 million in vegetable products from Tennessee to feed people in 15 nations, including India, Somalia and Rwanda.

Transporting and handling USAID's food and other aid generated \$17.7 million in fees for port services and transporting charges billed for Tennessee companies in 1993. In 1994, shipping and handling of aid brought \$22.2 million to Tennessee.

In 1994, USAID sponsored 82 foreign participants' training at Tennessee universities and educational facilities, usually including full tuition and living allowances. The 1995 program sponsored 85 students, and in 1996, 51 students were able to attend higher educational institutions in Tennessee with USAID help.

USAID's programs in Egypt financed \$503,809 in purchases from Tennessee in 1995.



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

**Chief of Multimedia Communications:**  
Suzanne H. Chase

**Editor:** Betty Snead

**Web Page Address:** [www.info.usaid.gov](http://www.info.usaid.gov)

**Questions:** [pinquiries@usaid.gov](mailto:pinquiries@usaid.gov)

**Phone:** (202) 712-4300