USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

FRONTLINES

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New regulations are revitalizing domestic poultry production in Mozambique—see pg. 5 to find out how.

This cartoon hen, part of a public awareness campaign, represents a new day for Mozambican poultry farmers.

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Administrator Henrietta Fore, Las Pallmas Greenhouse owner Luan Buqaj, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director Michael Farbman, and USAID/Kosovo interpreter Edmond Shyti view seedlings such as lettuce, cabbage, tomatoes, cucumbers, and peppers planted with machinery supported by USAID. The vegetable transplants are designed to be higher quality and less expensive to produce. See Insights column on pg. 3 for more on the Administrator's May trip to the Balkans.

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Borlaug Calls for New Green Revolution

Ben Barber, USAID

Green Revolution icon and Nobel Peace Laureate Norman Borlaug on his 90th birthday, 2004.

Nobel Peace Laureate Norman Borlaug, 94, told USAID officials that the world should avoid "complacency" in fighting the current food crisis and called for increased agricultural research to create a second Green Revolution.

"We need to replace the world's wheat everywhere—Canada, the United States, Asia," Borlaug told senior Agency officials May 19. He warned that a new virulent race of wheat stem rust is spreading from Uganda and could reach India and the United States in coming years, severely cutting grain harvests.

The aging icon of the Green Revolution, who has been honored with the Congressional Gold Medal as well as the 1970 Nobel Peace Prize, came to Washington in May to urge Congress to provide more funds for agricultural research.

Huge gains in yield per acre for wheat, especially in South Asia, came in the 1960s after Borlaug created a high-yielding, short stem wheat hybrid in Mexico, at the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center, known by its Spanish acronym CIMMYT.

USAID is the principal donor to CIMMYT and the 14 other research centers around the world, known collectively as the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). In each of the two past fiscal years, the United States gave about $60 million to CGIAR, whose annual budget is about $425 million.

However, due to extensive congressional earmarks, USAID

see **BORLAUG** on page 14 ▶

U.S. Revives Iraqi State Firms, Putting 100,000 Back to Work

As USAID in Iraq offers micro-loans to small businesses and trains local officials to manage budgets, a complementary U.S. military program to revive state-owned enterprises—such as the Ramadi ceramics factory—has restored 100,000 Iraqi jobs, said U.S. and Iraqi senior officials May 7 in Washington.

Some 200,000 Iraqis lost their jobs when cement, ceramics, glass, and other state firms were simply abandoned as the Saddam Hussein regime fell in 2003. Paul Brinkley, director of the Task Force to Improve Business and Stability Operations in Iraq (TFBSO), said 56 state firms have been restarted since 2006.

Since half the 26 million to 29 million Iraqis are under age 15, the goal of economic revival is to provide jobs for them in the future—as well as for unemployed workers today—so they do not fall prey to recruiters for violent militias and terrorist groups.

After a press conference May 7, Brinkley, an undersecretary of defense, told *FrontLines* that his TFBSO industrial revivals are complemented by USAID's work training local government officials and helping small business with micro-loans.

"I wish I could triple or quintuple the USAID budget in Iraq—it is critical to success since it puts in place social programs, the bedrock of progress," Brinkley told *FrontLines*.

"USAID is one of the greatest organizations in the U.S. government."

see **IRAQI JOBS** on page 14 ▶

See pgs. 7-10 for special report on global food crisis.

Agency Rebuilding Starts with 40 New Hires

Forty new USAID Foreign Service Officers took the oath of office from Administrator Henrietta Fore May 27 in the Ronald Reagan Building—the first of some 200 new hires to be added this year and an expected total of 1,000 hires over the next three years.

"I've always wanted a job with USAID because it's great to mix serving my country with development to help people of the world," said Cael Savage, 33, from Moscow, Idaho, a Peace Corps veteran from Ukraine, shortly after taking the oath.

The new staffers—half of them former Peace Corps volunteers—are part of the Development Leadership Initiative (DLI) that aims to double the number of Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) and restore the Agency to the size it

see **REBUILDING** on page 15 ▶

INSIDE DEVELOPMENT

WHAT THEY ARE SAYING . . .

A column devoted to what our partners and others in the field of foreign assistance are saying about development.

Senator Joseph Biden (D-Del.)

Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Statement at Full Committee Hearing on Food
May 14, 2008

Today the Committee on Foreign Relations will examine a topic that is making headlines around the world—the global food crisis.

Nobel laureate Norman Borlaug, the father of the Green Revolution, has said: 'Without food, man can live at most but a few weeks; without it, all other components of social justice are meaningless.'

Today, as we meet here, millions of men, women, and children around the world face at best hunger, at worst, starvation. The price of indispensable staples—wheat, rice, maize—has doubled in the last three years.

People are worried and angry; some are even rioting.

From Haiti to Egypt to Bangladesh, riots have broken out as people demand the right to affordable food. For the billion people in the world who live on less than a dollar a day, higher food prices are the difference between a full stomach and hunger. For many, it is the difference between life and death.

The effects of the global food crisis are also felt here in the United States. At home, the price of eggs has jumped 35 percent. A gallon of milk costs 23 percent more. Even Sam's Club and Costco are limiting the amount of rice consumers can purchase. This has had a serious effect on retired persons and working class families.

This crisis has caught policymakers unprepared.

For 20 years, foreign assistance funding for agriculture development has been declining. This is not a criticism of the Bush Administration; it was a problem for the Clinton Administration and for the first Bush Administration as well. Necessary investments have not been made. Donor nations lack a coherent food security strategy. Our response has been, I think, belated and disjointed.

The typhoon that devastated Burma, the earthquake that hit China—these natural disasters bring their own challenges. But the food crisis, which has been called a "silent tsunami," did not come without warning. Many of the factors have been obvious for years.

This crisis is unacceptable morally, and it is unsustainable politically and economically.

Along with Senator Lugar, I recently convened a series of hearings on smart power to examine whether we have the right institutions and non-military instruments to deal with new threats and challenges. The global food crisis is just such a new challenge. Our response exposes our weaknesses; but it also points the way to needed reforms.

Experts cite many factors for today's high food prices. Few seem to be new. With proper planning, foresight and coordination, this crisis might have been managed.

But we have not changed course as the price of food has nearly doubled in the last three years. Only now, with widespread hunger and civil unrest has the drumbeat of concern reached a high enough pitch to awaken us to action.

As all of the world's religions tell us, we have a moral obligation to feed the hungry. We once had the vision to do that. It was called the Green Revolution. It transformed agriculture practices in countries from Mexico to India. It allowed food production to keep pace with population growth. It saved a generation from famine and starvation.

It was a model of what vision, planning, and resources can do. But since then, our global food policy has lacked vision, lacked planning, lacked resources.

Without concerted action from our government and the international community, I think we are in danger of erasing recent progress to eradicate hunger and poverty. The World Bank estimates that potentially 100 million new people could slip back into extreme poverty because of high food prices.

Today, I am inquiring of the witnesses about a new approach to food policy and the global food crisis. I believe it is imperative that we rededicate resources and attention in four areas, the details of which I am anxious to hear fleshed out by the witnesses:

First, we need to reinvest in agriculture development. Some have called for a "New Deal for Global Food Policy." I support those calls—what the world needs is a second Green Revolution. That means funding for innovation, research, new techniques.

Second, we need to make sure our institutions are organized effectively to address the food challenge. A report from the Government Accountability Office to be released later this month concludes that the U.S. and other donors have not made food security—cutting hunger in half by 2015—a top priority. This report also shows that we lack an integrated strategy for dealing with agriculture development and food policy. Various U.S. agencies are pursuing isolated agriculture strategies that do not share a common vision. Reform needs to happen quickly and immediately.

Third, we should ask the hard questions about our existing food policies. Does our current biofuels policy, which I have supported, that diverts corn from food to fuel make sense? How much is it diverting? I have heard varying estimates. Should we provide more flexibility to our food aid program and allow USAID to locally purchase food abroad to feed hungry people instead of requiring them to buy American and shoulder all the transportation costs associated with that?

Finally, the international community should consider a global compact on food that will eliminate crippling food tariffs affecting the poorest countries. With those countries, trade is not a matter of competition—it is a matter of fairness.

Both panels today are well placed to help us with this inquiry and to address three critical questions: Why is there a food crisis? Could we have avoided this crisis? How do we need to respond in the immediate, and to make a future crisis much less likely?

[USAID] Administrator Henrietta Fore and Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers Edward Lazear will start off the hearing. They are at the forefront of U.S. Government efforts to respond to the food crisis. Ms. Fore is just back from Burma, facing the aftermath of the typhoon.

On our second panel, we will be joined by Executive Director Josette Sheeran of the U.N. World Food Program, Dr. Peter McPherson, a former Administrator of USAID and President Emeritus of Michigan State University, and James Lyons, Vice President of Communications and Policy at Oxfam.

I would close with the following. President John F. Kennedy once stated:

"Never before has man had such capacity to control his own environment, to end thirst and hunger, to conquer poverty and disease, to banish illiteracy and massive human misery. We have the power to make this the best generation of mankind in the history of the world—or to make it the last."

That was more than a generation ago. It seems to me that it still holds today. I look forward to your testimony this morning. ★

Emergency Food Aid Sent to Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti—As soaring food prices drove millions of very poor Haitians to scramble to pay for meals, USAID boosted emergency food aid to the Caribbean island nation of 8 million people to $45 million. This is in addition to the $34.5 million of development food aid already planned for fiscal year 2008.

Speaking in Miami to Haitian-American community leaders, Administrator Henrietta Fore said on May 23: "The United States remains ready to help the people of Haiti overcome emergency food shortages and to make progress in the long term."

Fore said USAID would add $25 million in emergency food aid, bringing the Agency total to $45 million. The money will allow the World Food Program, Catholic Relief Services, and World Vision to supply 36,000 tons of beans, rice, vegetable oil, and other food to 2.5 million Haitians.

The popular independent station Radio Metropole in Port-au-Prince asked Haitians in the street how escalating food prices in May had affected them. Their comments in Haitian Creole were translated into English by Karine Roy, a foreign service national employee at the USAID mission in Haiti.

"Things are so hard…I cannot speak anymore, I am hungry…I do not know what to do," said one person.

"Things are hard for us, we cannot live anymore," said another.

"With 50 gourdes, one could buy stuff; now 100 gourdes is nothing: you cannot eat, your children cannot eat, school is expensive, food is expensive, house is expensive…," said a third person.

Rice prices have increased nearly 70 percent since September 2007, while corn has increased by nearly 35 percent in the same period.

Haiti also suffers from low farming technology, erosion, frequent hurricanes, and poor roads. Land ownership patterns also contribute to low harvests as sharecroppers often lack cash to buy water, seeds, and fertilizer.

Long-term U.S. food aid over the next 12 months will target the sick, disabled, orphans, mothers, children, and the elderly; and it provides "food for work" which will put Haitians to work repairing irrigation systems, roads, and land to boost crop production.

Since 2004, the U.S. has provided more than $600 million in aid to Haiti and President Bush has called for $245 million in assistance for 2009, said Fore. ★

Mission of the Month

INDIA

Anita Khemka

Urban health workers monitor children and women's health, and provide contraceptives to women through USAID health programs.

As Indian Slums Grow, Aid Focuses on Women and Children

By Heather Sullivan

Challenge

Millions of Indian families have moved into cities in recent years. But in addition to finding jobs and opportunity, they have formed pockets of poverty where mothers and children often fall prey to preventable diseases.

Some 20 percent of the world's maternal deaths and 25 percent of children's deaths occur in India, and many of these are among the 100 million urban poor—a number that is likely to double by 2020.

In 1998, the child mortality rate among India's urban poor was 102 deaths per 1,000 live births, close to the rural rate of 104 deaths. While some improvements have been made, in 2006, only 54 percent of urban poor pregnant women received complete prenatal checkups. Sixty percent of urban poor children are not fully immunized.

The public health system is lax and private hospitals are costly. The urban poor also suffer from over-crowding. Many live in illegal slums that are not zoned residential and lack sewer and water services.

Innovative Response

In late 2000, as part of a child survival planning exercise, a team from Washington joined with colleagues from the USAID mission in India to identify the health of the urban poor as a key priority for improving public health in India.

"The team observed that the urban poor population was significant and rapidly increasing, their health indicators were worse than those of rural populations, and the health of the urban poor was receiving virtually no attention—either from donors, multilateral agencies or the state and national governments in India," said Massee Bateman, a member of the 2000 team and later the leader of the program in India.

In 2002, USAID began providing technical assistance to national and local Indian government officials to develop and carry out health programs for the urban poor.

At the Indian government's request, USAID also developed health plans for specific cities that identified and mapped all of their slums. The plans lay out steps for health care delivery to the most needy.

Demonstration and learning sites were set up in four cities: health workers there monitor the well-being of women living in slums, ensure all pregnant women receive prenatal checkups, and encourage mothers to immunize and breastfeed their babies. The workers also distribute contraceptives, promote hospital deliveries, and help organize community health organizations.

Results

The programs have had a significant impact on health in the slums. In one city, the percentage of infants immunized increased from 32 to 72 between 2003 and 2006.

"Earlier, our communities were not open to getting children immunized—my own children did not get them," said Suneeta Kochale, an urban health worker.

"We viewed the government staff with skepticism. Today, the women themselves ask for prenatal check-ups. They protest when the government nurses do not turn up."

There is now greater policy support and resources for health programs from both the public and private sectors focused on the urban poor. Seven states are now promoting urban health agendas. These states are home to 42 percent of the urban poor population of India.

At the national level, India's government has increased its urban health programming. It adopted urban health guidelines developed with USAID's technical assistance, and in 2006 it established a task force focused on urban health that culminated with the announcement of a National Urban Health Mission (NUHM) to be formally launched this year.

The NUHM, a multi–billion dollar initiative, will work to improve health care for India's urban poor. Borrowing lessons from USAID's pilot programs, it will engage NGOs, the private sector, and communities in planning and management of the health care service delivery. It will also promote community health risk pooling and health insurance to protect the poor from the impoverishing effect of out-of-pocket health care expenditures. ★

INSIGHTS

FROM HENRIETTA H. FORE

A four-day trip to the Balkans took me to Pristina, Kosovo, and Tirana, Albania, May 16–19, where I met with the presidents and prime ministers of each country and visited with USAID mission staff. Both Kosovo and Albania are in the process of remarkable historic transformations.

On Feb. 17, Kosovo declared independence from Serbia. By the time of my trip, 39 countries had recognized Kosovo, including over 60 percent of the U.N. Security Council, and two-thirds of the EU.

The primary goal of U.S. assistance there is to help ensure that Kosovo is able to handle the responsibilities of independence, move away from international administration, and achieve democratic self-rule that protects the rights of minorities.

USAID first opened its offices in Pristina in 1996. Over the past nine years, $1.2 billion in U.S. assistance has been committed to the reconstruction of Kosovo, the building of democratic institutions, and the establishment of a viable economy. In meeting these challenges, I stressed to the people of Kosovo the particular importance of small- and medium-size enterprises as places for job growth, and the importance of rule of law and education as the essential basis for Kosovo's future.

After Pristina, I flew to Tirana and congratulated Albanians on their invitation to join NATO, which was issued at ceremonies in Bucharest several weeks before my trip. A generation ago, Albania was still struggling with its legacy as a European outpost of Maoist influence. Soon, it will reclaim its ties with Europe as it joins the West's premier security alliance and deepens its commitment to a democratic future.

The problem of corruption is perhaps the country's most important challenge. While there, I took the opportunity to reiterate statements made by Ambassador John L. Withers II upon the May 7 release of the third annual USAID-funded Corruption in Albania Survey, which emphasized the responsibility of all Albanians to demand an end to corruption. USAID programming will intensify anticorruption efforts, particularly relating to immunity. The Agency foresees tougher government sanctions for lawbreakers, enforced by fair and apolitical trials and convictions.

As a mark of Albania's progress, it now finds itself at the end of a two-year, $13.85 million MCC Threshold Program, which has transformed the country's public administration for business registration, tax, and public procurement systems through innovative IT solutions. During my trip, I saw first-hand the bustling business registration center which has registered over 11,000 new businesses since opening in September 2007. I also participated in the inauguration of the National Agency for Information Society, which will help ensure that public services operate with maximum efficiency and transparency. ★

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS

BRIEFS

U.S. Resumes Food Aid to North Korea

WASHINGTON—USAID announced May 16 that the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) agreed to resume U.S. food assistance. The North Koreans say they face a major shortfall in food supplies.

The United States intends to provide 500,000 metric tons in food commodities over 12 months beginning in June. The World Food Program (WFP) will distribute 400,000 tons and U.S. NGOs approximately 100,000 tons.

The WFP and NGO staff will have broad geographic access to populations in need in order to monitor the distribution. The food aid will come from the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust. Before suspending food aid in 2006 due to an inability to monitor deliveries, the U.S. government provided about 2 million tons of food since 1995.

Zimbabwe Seizes U.S. Food Aid

WASHINGTON—The United States condemned as "unconscionable" the seizure June 6 by Zimbabwe authorities of a truckload of American food aid intended for hungry children. The food was given to government supporters instead.

U.S. officials said Zimbabwe military and police officials hijacked the truck with 20 metric tons of grains, beans, and oil, and distributed it at a political rally of supporters of President Robert Mugabe's party.

"This unconscionable behavior must stop," said Administrator Henrietta Fore of USAID, which had contracted the hijacked truck to distribute food.

"It is unacceptable for the government of Zimbabwe to steal food from hungry children," Fore said.

Mugabe's government suspended the work of all international aid agencies, accusing them of supplying food to opposition parties.

U.S. Sends Aid to China Quake Victims

After the May 12 earthquake in China killed 70,000 and left 17,000 missing, USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) provided specialized search, rescue, and recovery equipment, valued at $800,000, including 40 crates of saws, hand tools, hydraulic gear, concrete cutters, generators, and personal safety equipment.

USAID sent nine experts from the Los Angeles County Fire Department and the Fairfax County, Va., Fire and Rescue Department, as well as USAID support staff.

In response to the Chinese request for shelter assistance, USAID deployed a shelter expert and a disaster specialist to Beijing and Chengdu in early June.

On May 18, two U.S. Air Force C-17 aircraft arrived in Chengdu with emergency relief supplies, including blankets, plastic sheeting, tents, water containers, and food, valued at nearly $1.3 million, including transportation costs. The U.S. military airlifted 153 medium-sized tents on May 28 to Chengdu.

The earthquake displaced approximately 15 million people, of which 5 million people were homeless, according to Sichuan provincial authorities.

From news reports and other sources. ★

Worldwide Activists Discuss How to Sustain Democracy, Stop 'Backsliding'

By Rebecca Kinsey

The Legal Community of Pakistan, the Journalists of Somalia, and the Monks of Burma won awards for exceptional courage in working for freedom and democracy at a world conference of democracy supporters from 100 countries in April.

The delegates struggled to prevent "backsliding" or movement back towards dictatorship that has unsettled democracy movements in many post-Soviet countries, as well as some in Latin America.

The 450 democracy activists, practitioners, scholars, and donors met in Kiev, Ukraine, April 6 to 9 for the Fifth Assembly of the World Movement for Democracy (WMD). The event's theme: "Making Democracy Work: From Principles to Performance."

Over four days, the participants focused on ways to further the democratic gains they had already achieved and to defend against the real threat of backsliding away from democracy towards authoritarianism.

The successes of democracy advocates and civil society in the late 1980s and early 1990s—most notably highlighted in Eastern Europe and countries of the former Soviet Union—have given way to challenges that threaten states and democracies worldwide, assembly participants said.

During this decade, the world has witnessed a backlash by regimes across the globe against democratic and vibrant civil society, often under the guise of protecting sovereignty, advancing national interests, or combating terrorism. And some new democracies have failed to achieve the economic gains they promised their citizens. These countries are faced with a disenchanted citizenry still struggling to obtain basic education, improved health, and economic prosperity.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For transcripts of keynote addresses and multi-language copies of the "Defending Civil Society" report, go to the Fifth Assembly Web site at www.wmd.org/fifth/index.html. For a hard copy of the report, contact the World Movement at world@ned.org.

The WMD began in 1999 as a global network serving as a lobby and facilitator of democracy.

Its Fifth Assembly, funded in part by USAID's Office of Democracy and Governance, is a biannual forum for leading democracy advocates and activists from around the world such as Zimbabwean students, Western donors, Malaysian trade unionists, Bhutanese journalists, and Colombian mayors.

Ukrainian President Victor Yushchenko and First Lady Kateryna Yushchenko spoke of Ukraine's democratic progress since 2004. Myroslava Gongadze, Ukrainian journalist and human rights activist, also took the stage. She founded the Gongadze Foundation, which honors the work of her late husband and fellow journalist Georgiy Gongadze, whose murder in 2000 helped to spark the Orange Revolution.

The first plenary session, "Making Democracy Work," featured a panel of experts led by Ken Wollack, president of the National Democratic Institute (NDI), and included former Peruvian president Alejandro Toledo, World Movement Steering Committee Chair Ayo Obe of Nigeria, and United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) Director Roland Rich.

The panel identified four challenges to democracy promotion in the post-Cold War period, known as post-Third Wave:

- increasing government responsiveness to citizens at all levels;
- removing obstacles to effective political participation;
- reducing corruption and state capture; and
- developing an educated electorate with access to independent information regarding policy choices and trade-offs.

Civil society's role in nascent democracies, panelists argued, is to move beyond street-level activism to sophisticated policy articulation. Civil society must develop the expertise to effectively hold legislatures, judiciaries, and executives accountable for election results, service delivery outcomes, economic growth, and rule of law. ★

IRAQ MISSION PREPARES FOR ELECTIONS, DELAYS MOVE TO NEW EMBASSY

The USAID mission in Baghdad, which is helping the United Nations prepare Iraqis for provincial elections, will not move into the newly-completed U.S. Embassy there for another year, Mission Director Christopher Crowley said on a visit to Washington.

USAID staff will continue to use its office building and reinforced housing units in the Green Zone for another year, Crowley said May 21, during a broad ranging discussion of the work the Agency is carrying out in Iraq. The mission had been expected to move this year but secure space in the new embassy is not yet available and the current USAID houses and office building are secure and comfortable.

Mission staff are looking forward to October when provincial elections are scheduled to take place although the election law is still under debate, Crowley

see **ELECTIONS** on page 14 ▶

MOZAMBIQUE TRADES EXPIRED POULTRY IMPORTS FOR HOME GROWN

Mozambican farmer Celestino Manquante tried to support his family of 10 by growing peanuts and corn but remained too poor to buy basic necessities. But three years ago, Manquante got involved with a USAID-funded poultry program, implemented by TechnoServe, which he called "a gift from God."

In the past, Mozambicans mainly purchased imported frozen poultry even though TechnoServe research showed that consumers preferred fresher domestic chicken. That was because imported chicken—having exceeded its "sell-by date"—was being "dumped" into the market at rock-bottom prices.

TechnoServe concluded that a revitalized Mozambican poultry industry could compete with foreign chicken, especially with the right policies and technical support, including integrating best practices in biosecurity and food safety.

With support from USAID and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, a three-year industry development program was started. It is helping 1,000 farmers like Manquante increase their incomes by $500 a year—a quadrupling of the average annual income in rural areas of approximately $120. This program is also creating a new $70-million-a-year market for tens of thousands of small-scale producers of feed grains.

With TechnoServe assistance, the National Poultry Association worked with the Mozambican government to introduce regulations requiring all poultry products to be imported within 90 days of slaughter. This largely eliminated "dumping" of imported poultry: domestic production jumped to 50 percent of overall consumption, up from 30 percent in 2005.

The USAID program links poultry farmers such as Manquante with large feed mills and hatcheries and offers farmers access to credit, allowing them to receive chicks, feed, and vaccinations up front. The costs are deducted from their income when they sell full-grown chickens.

The public has been made aware of the new domestic poultry production through a national marketing campaign starring a "sexy" Mozambican hen strutting through a roost of admiring male chickens.

This hen is part of a national marketing campaign in Mozambique to inform the public about a USAID-funded domestic poultry program which is eliminating expired imports sold at rock-bottom prices.

In 2005, to address a possible avian influenza outbreak, TechnoServe, Cargill, Inc, and local stakeholders developed a contingency plan to cull poultry and to compensate farmers should an outbreak arise. The Mozambique government earmarked an initial $10 million for the plan.

TechnoServe, a Connecticut-based NGO that received about $11 million of its $28 million budget in 2006 from the U.S. government, also assessed the national veterinary public health services. The findings led to development of a community animal health program model, which incorporates vaccination programs, education, and surveillance.

Farmers also receive training so their families can manage their newly increased incomes. Manquante and his wife used theirs to register their children for school for the first time. They've also made home improvements and invested in a bicycle to avoid long treks on foot to the nearest city for supplies. ★

World Bank Reports USAID Used Media to Build Peace After Conflict

WASHINGTON—When a World Bank panel convened in May to explore the role of communications in restoring peace and development after conflicts and in fragile states, USAID's Office of Transition Activities (OTI) was hailed as a project model.

Most communications officers involved in development and relief operations with NGOs and aid agencies have a limited view—they see media as public relations aimed at donors and the public back home, said panelist Shanthi Kalathil of the Bank.

But OTI views communications as a vital tool in restoring services, calming fears, directing the return of refugees, and a step towards establishing a free press.

"We did a study of communications in a post-conflict environment—we looked at DfID [the British Department for International Development], OTI" and other aid groups, said Kalathil.

"OTI saw communications as an integral part of peacebuilding and governance," she said. "They found new ways to work."

For example, she said, OTI set up radio stations after disasters or conflict—a time when many people rely on rumor and are susceptible to being misled or to incitement.

Radio stations were set up to provide reliable information and build a broader dialogue after controversial elections or conflict.

In some peacekeeping operations, these radios could transition into independent media. They not only send out reporting that holds governments accountable, they also provide a way for the government to "listen to the citizens," said Kalathil.

When the fighting dies down, the reassuring voice of radios and televisions can be the most effective tool in getting people back to work, off the streets, and away from harm. But after a conflict—or in fragile states where the police, courts, and security are not too reliable—it's not easy to jump-start neutral, unbiased communications.

"In times of peace, communication processes can enable citizens to engage in dialogue, serve as platforms for debate, anchor governance reforms, and facilitate poverty reduction and development through provision of needed information," according to a synopsis, provided to *FrontLines*, of "Toward a New Model: Media and Communication in Post-Conflict and Fragile States," a paper to be published in June 2008 by the Communication for Governance and Accountability Program (CommGAP) at the World Bank.

"Local and international media can provide important, reliable and timely humanitarian and political information in the midst of chaos, helping people navigate their tumultuous surroundings," the synopsis said.

The paper notes that communication and media sector activities tend to get funneled "primarily toward public affairs or public information divisions, rather than treated as fundamental, technical components of peace building and governance" and calls this a "mischaracterization of the role of media and communication."

The publication is focusing primarily on OTI because of its "relatively long history, unique mission, flexible operational parameters, and integrative approach," according to the synopsis.

The OTI strategy, it said, consists of: communication in support of humanitarian relief, peacebuilding, and good governance; supporting state responsiveness through strategic communication; and independent media development.

A sound use of media after conflict can support democracy; direct former fighters to aid and training programs; train journalists to cover war crimes trials or truth-and-reconciliation commissions; and help local governments reach out to minority communities. ★

GRASSROOTS GROUPS IN LEBANON WORK FOR UNITY

When violence erupted in May, Lebanon was closer to large scale civil strife than it had been since its civil war ended in 1990. While political leaders brokered an agreement to end the fighting, civil society groups and NGOs were making their own moves and intensifying efforts to address ongoing tensions at the grassroots level.

Through small grants and technical assistance, USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) has helped NGOs and other groups diffuse tensions whipped up by political rhetoric. Since September 2007, these NGOs have created youth committees, used alternative media to deliver social messages, and helped resolve community conflicts.

These groups have provided services, called for change, and built consensus. The USAID partners share a commitment to bring people together against the tide of divisive national politics.

Hayat Dalal of No Sectarianism, a youth group that isn't quite a year old, said NGOs are the best vehicle for facing crises because they "work on the ground, with the people," often filling gaps left by weakened government institutions.

No Sectarianism, which receives grant money from USAID, is reaching out to hundreds of Lebanese youth with one simple message: "Whatever our sect or religion, we live together on the same land, and Lebanon is for all of us."

"Although things look very dim right now, I do believe that the situation in Lebanon is bound to improve," said Zeina Roueiheb of the Maharat Foundation, a few months before plans for a national unity government were announced. The foundation is a USAID partner working with young journalists and media students to promote objective news coverage.

Roueiheb said NGOs like Maharat can help foster "tolerance and acceptance among the Lebanese."

see **GRASSROOTS** on page 14 ▶

THE REGIONS

MIDDLE EAST

Ecotourism Saves Egypt's Ancient Coral Reefs

SHARM EL-SHEIK, Egypt—Mass tourism, pollution, boat traffic, over-fishing and other threats threaten the indescribably beautiful coral reefs at the Ras Mohammed National Park.

Diving on the reef or walking among the thousands of tourists, one sees both sides of the reef's importance—the economic and the environmental.

A major tourist attraction, coral reefs near beaches along the Red Sea and the Mediterranean bring in visitors from around the world. USAID is working with the Egyptian government, NGOs, scientists, tourism experts, and others to protect the reefs and encourage environmentally sound tourism.

First Lady Laura Bush visited the area May 18 as part of a Middle East tour, taking a glass-bottom boat ride to tour the reefs and view some of the wonders preserved through a 10-year effort by USAID.

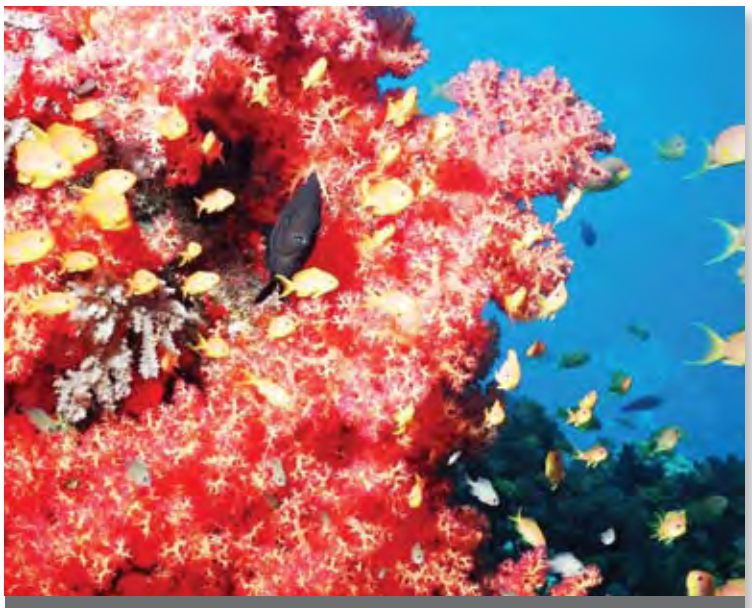
Coral reefs contain a wealth of marine life, and they also protect coastlines from storm damage, erosion, and flooding. Ras Mohammad, in particular, is home to more than 200 different species of coral and well over 1,000 species of sea life—from fish to turtles. The park's Web site says some of the coral is between 15,000 and 2 million years old.

The quandary, however, is how to keep the region pristine and boost the economic prospects of the people who live and work there. Over the years, USAID has provided technical assistance, money, and construction equipment, and has acted as a liaison between the various players who are working to preserve the reefs.

The Agency provides training and helped create a manual focused on conserving and managing reefs that come under the jurisdiction of a hotel or other property owner, otherwise known as house reefs. Many of the Red Sea reefs belong to hotels. By showing hotels how to conserve those reefs, the program aims to conserve a large percentage of those in danger.

USAID is also promoting ecotourism—instead of mass tourism—as the model for the region. Under ecotourism, a

see **EGYPT** on page 13 ▶



USAID/LIFE Red Sea project

Fish swim among the coral reefs USAID works to preserve in the Red Sea.

White House photo by Shealah Craighead

First Lady Laura Bush sits with USAID Cairo Mission Director Hilda Arellano as they prepare to launch out on a Challenger Boat Tour May 17 off the coast of Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt.

EUROPE & EURASIA

Plastic Recycling Changes Macedonian Landscape

By Olya Catto

SKOPJE, Macedonia—Macedonia is known for the breathtaking beauty of its turquoise lakes, picturesque mountains, and ancient monasteries. But the country didn't want to get a reputation for an increasing amount of litter—especially plastic waste—that was destined to mar its aspirations to build a tourism industry.

To help the government, USAID launched the $1.2 million Plastic Recycling Project in 2005, aiming to build a viable recycling business in Macedonia. The approach was two-fold: to develop public-private partnerships between municipalities, public communal companies, and local communities to collect and recycle plastic waste, while raising demand for recycling services through increased public awareness. Key project elements included building networks among business leaders, and providing extensive technical and financial support to all stakeholders.

The initial results of the effort are impressive—the amount of collected bottles doubled from 1,500 tons in 2006 to approximately 3,000 in 2007. Generated exports from bailed or processed plastic bottles total $1.6 million, and employment in the recycling industry has increased 60 percent from 2006 to 2007, mostly benefiting disadvantaged minorities. Emerging competition in the industry is creating large demand for plastic bottles, whose price per kilo rose from 7-8 to 10-12 MKD (Macedonian denars) or about 25 to 30 U.S. cents.

New companies have entered the industry, including foreign investors. Turkish ERH Plastic is expanding its facility to include production of plastic granulates, and Taiwanese GreenTech, with recycling operations in Romania

see **MACEDONIA** on page 15 ▶

Primary school students, like these young Skopje Recycling Club members, are taking the lead in organizing neighborhood outreach and clean-up activities to increase environmental awareness.

ASIA

Child Health Education Reaches Remote Areas of Central Asia

TERMEZ, Uzbekistan—Zameera Fazilova lives in this rural area of Uzbekistan with her husband, mother-in-law, and baby Mamura.

As the daughter-in-law of the household, Fazilova is responsible for the laundry, cooking, cleaning, and other household chores, as well as tending the family's vegetable garden and livestock. With this workload and in keeping with tradition, her mother-in-law, Nafesa-hon, takes care of the baby.

There is another tradition just as old in this region. Once babies like Mamura turn 6 weeks old, Uzbek grandmothers feed them a high-calorie diet that is supposed to help them grow strong. Mamura's meals were typical: pieces of fried mutton fat, plenty of bread, and tea.

see **ASIA** on page 15 ▶

Project HOPE

Zameera Fazilova and her daughter Mamura, of Termez, Uzbekistan, are featured on the cover of a Healthy Family project brochure on child health.

USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SPECIAL REPORT

WWW. USAID.GOV JUNE 2008

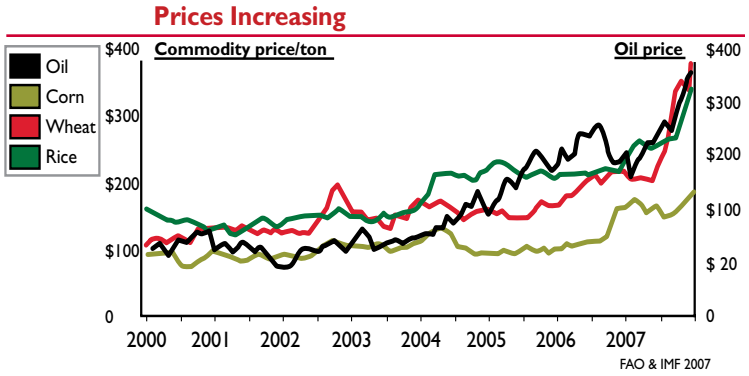
GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS

Current Situation

Typical food crises we have dealt with before—from droughts, floods, or conflict—have had clear geographic footprints, limited durations, and relatively homogenous affected populations. But the current crisis, being driven by high food and fuel prices, may not have any of these characteristics. This crisis is likely to be much more diffuse in the locations affected, the length of time it persists, and who is affected. These differences are likely to challenge our most fundamental and practiced humanitarian assessment methodologies, response capabilities, targeting skills, and delivery systems.

Henrietta H. Fore, Administrator, USAID and Director of U.S. Foreign Assistance

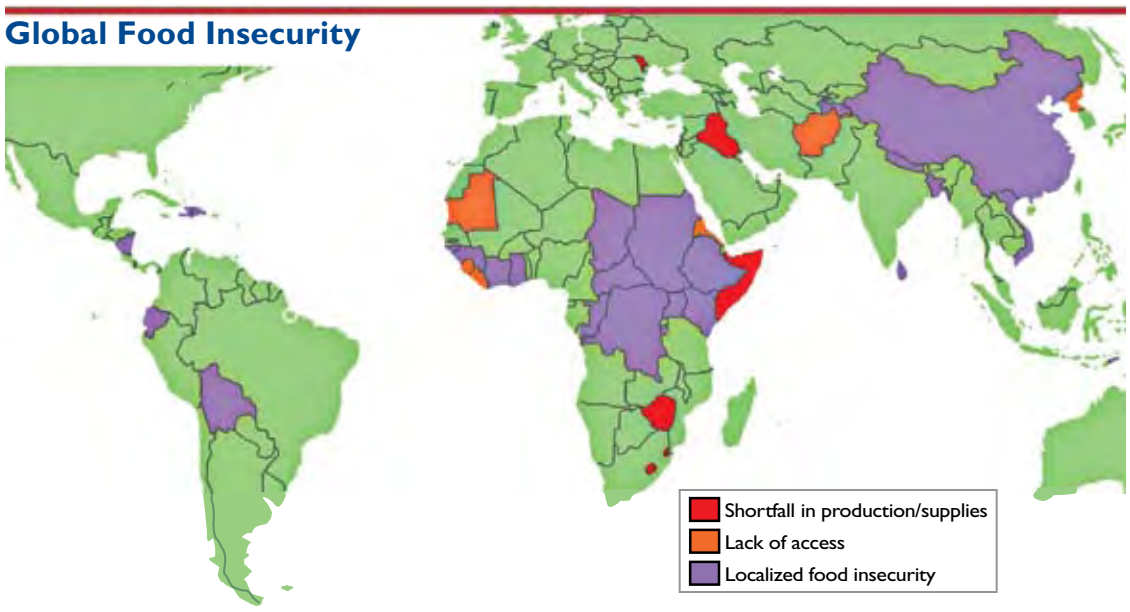
Prices Increasing



Credit: Richard Nyberg/USAID

Village chief of Boula Téné, Theodore Mada Keita, holds up the fonio grain that helps feed his family in southern Senegal. As the smallest of millet species, fonio is both nutritious and one of the world's fastest growing cereals, reaching maturity in as little as six to eight weeks. The grain can grow in semi-arid areas with poor soils where rains are brief and unreliable. With USAID support, Chief Keita's community is working to better process and sell this nutritious grain.

Global Food Insecurity



According to the International Monetary Fund, global food prices increased an average of 43 percent in the 12 months ending in March. The U.S. Department of Agriculture reports that from March 2007 to March 2008, wheat, soybean, and corn prices increased by 146 percent, 71 percent, and 41 percent, respectively. As the price of grains climbs, so does the price of meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy, as well as other food products that depend on these primary foodstuffs. Bulk rice reached record price levels in May, exceeding $1,000 per metric ton (MT), compared to about $200 per MT only five years ago. Nearly half the world's population depends on rice as a staple food, including an even higher proportion of the world's poor people. The price spike has become a politically sensitive issue in the developing world, prompting some governments to impose market-distorting price controls and export barriers. The International Committee of the Red Cross said in May that rising food prices are likely to worsen the circumstances of millions of people around the world who are affected by armed conflict.

A number of factors have contributed to the rapid rise in global food prices. High energy prices impact agriculture in two ways—by increasing the cost of materials farmers use, and increasing costs for middlemen to move agricultural products to market. The manufacture of chemical fertilizers, which are derived from fossil fuels, is directly impacted by rising energy costs. Some kinds of fertilizer have nearly tripled in price in the past year.

The growing economies of the world's two most populous nations are contributing to the global demand for food and rising prices. China, with its population of 1.3 billion, and India, home to 1.1 billion people, together feed more than a third of the world's population. Both China and India are increasingly looking abroad to meet the growing food needs and changing diets of their people. Statisticians have calculated that the demand for food increases by 0.7 percent for each percentage point rise in income. Accordingly, last year alone, when India's per capita growth was about 7.5 percent, the country needed about 5.2 percent more food than the year before. Changing eating habits reflect the rising expectations that have accompanied the two countries' phenomenal rates of growth since the 1980s. Higher-value foods like meat and milk have led to increased demand for grains used to feed livestock. China's soybean purchases, for example, now amount to more than half of the world's production. Repercussions of these changes are felt in markets well beyond the Asian continent. For the middle class in poorer countries, meat has become a luxury and bread is hard to find, while the poorest of the poor are unable to purchase sufficient food.

In other countries, adverse weather-related events have lowered crop yields, particularly affecting wheat harvests. Australia, a major food producer, has been especially hard hit by prolonged drought. Many attribute weather conditions that are dramatically more variable than 40 years ago to global climate change. This has made farming, especially for smallholders, more precarious. Add to this the fact that as world population growth increases the amount of food needed, it also decreases the amount of arable land available for agriculture. Such threats are long term and affect poorer countries disproportionately, as demographic pressures further strain depleted resources. The devastating cyclone that struck Burma in May, instantly destroying the rice crop of a country that had been a rice

exporter, may be a prelude to some of the challenges for world food security in the months ahead.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic also has repercussions for food security as the infection claims the lives of some of the world's rural, agricultural work force and weakens those who survive. It also raises the need for more nutritional foods to prolong lives and keep them productive.

Contrary to some reports, cropland dedicated to ethanol conversion is playing only a marginal role in affecting food supply and price increases. The U.S. Council of Economic Advisors estimates that increased corn ethanol production accounted for only 3 percent of the 43 percent increase in global food prices over the 12 months ending in March.

More general economic forces are affecting world food security, however. Depreciation of the U.S. dollar drives the price of oil higher and contributes to the increase in food prices, globally as well as in the United States. When increasing demand meets diminished supply, especially for essential products that have no substitutes, inflation is the result. This rise in prices for food and oil, in particular, stands behind a worrisome inflation trend that is being felt globally but has disproportionate effect on the world's poorer countries.

Increased food prices particularly affect developing countries, and the poorest people within those countries, where populations spend a greater proportion of income on basic food commodities. Approximately 1 billion people—or one-sixth of the world's population—subsist on less than $1 per day. Of this population, 162 million survive on less than 50 cents per day. The poor spend half or more of their income on food, according to the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), so price increases are very difficult for these households to absorb. Unlike past food shortages, this one is less localized and rural, and therefore is having a broader impact. In recent weeks, civil unrest over increased food prices has erupted in several countries, including Haiti, Egypt, Indonesia, Cameroon, and Peru. It is increasingly manifesting itself in urban settings with potential national security consequences that add to the typical humanitarian dimensions of the crisis.

THE WORLD'S POOR

Worldwide Population Subsisting on Less Than 50 cents/day	162 million	IFPRI – 2007
Worldwide Population Subsisting on Less Than $1/day	Approximately 1 billion	IFPRI – 2007

USG Support for Food Aid

This Administration is expanding its Food for Peace Program in every possible way. The product of our abundance must be used more effectively to relieve hunger and help economic growth in all corners of the globe.
President John F. Kennedy

U.S. international food assistance has long played a critical role in responding to global food insecurity. The principal mechanism of America's food-aid effort is the P.L. 480 Title II program, which President Dwight Eisenhower signed into law in 1954. President John F. Kennedy appropriately gave P.L. 480 a new name—Food for Peace—and housed it in the newly created USAID. Since its inception, Food for Peace has helped feed more than 3 billion people in 150 countries.

The United States continues to be the world's largest food aid donor today, providing approximately half of the world's food aid. In fiscal year 2007, USAID provided more than 2.1 million metric tons (MT) of P.L. 480 Title II commodities, worth $1.87 billion that reached an estimated 41 million beneficiaries in 56 countries around the world. More than 354,630 MT of food commodities, valued at $356 million, were provided to an estimated 6.4 million beneficiaries in Sudan alone.

In recent years, the United States has provided approximately $1 billion annually to the U.N. World Food Program (WFP), or approximately 40 percent of all contributions to the organization. The United States contributes significant international food aid through non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and is committed to working with other donors, from both the private and non-profit sectors, to provide food aid to populations in need.

The Food for Peace program is governed by a number of regulations, including a requirement that the U.S. government purchase U.S. food for aid instead of sending cash or buying food overseas, in all but the most exceptional cases.

A villager in Ghazni Provice south of Ka
treated people and their farm animals

Ben Barber/USAID

A worker examines varieties of corn seeds stored in a cold vault at the U.S.-funded International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center outside Mexico City. It was here that the high-yielding wheat of the Green Revolution was created in the 1960s.

Ben Barber/USAID

Workers check the growth of wheat plants in a hothouse at the U.S.-supported plant research center outside Mexico City. Plants are cross-bred to increase yield and to improve resistance to drought, soil salinity, insects and disease.

GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS

Ben Barber/USAID

abul diverts water into irrigation channels as U.S. doctors and veterinarians in an all-day special clinic in 2004.

Ben Barber/USAID

A baker lifts a pallet loaded with small, hot, crusty wheat loaves from his oven in a crowded area of central Cairo. Government subsidized bread has become a staple for Egyptians.

In addition, 75 percent of food aidmust be shipped on U.S.-flag vessels. The way the program was structured guaranteed domestic support for important foreign policy goals.

The basic structure of Food for Peace has proven its worth over the course of more than a half century and the overriding goals of the program are even more salient today. But current food challenges are bringing calls for changes both in the delivery and design of U.S. food aid programs in order to meet the needs of today's humanitarian emergencies and food needs.

USG Responses to Current Food Crisis

With the new international funding I'm announcing today, we're sending a clear message to the world: that America will lead the fight against hunger for years to come.
President George W. Bush

On April 14, President George W. Bush directed the Secretary of Agriculture to draw down on the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust (BEHT) to meet emergency food aid needs. With this action, the American people made available an estimated $200 million in emergency food aid through USAID.

The Emerson Trust is a food reserve of up to 4 million MT of wheat, corn, sorghum, and rice administered under the authority of the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. When an unanticipated emergency arises that cannot be met with P.L. 480 resources, the Secretary may authorize the release of commodities from the reserve in order to meet those immediate needs. Each year, up to 500,000 MT may be released, plus up to another 500,000 MT that was not released in prior years.

On May 1, President Bush requested $770 million in additional allocations that will primarily fund urgent short-term assistance programming designed to:

- Preserve price parity in existing food aid programs.
- Provide funds for local purchase of food aid.
- Support voucher programs in urban areas.
- Help smallholder farmers to obtain the fertilizers and seeds they need to plant crops.

Total USAID funding committed to address food insecurity and price increases:

USAID Food and Related Assistance Worldwide in FY 2007	$ 1,620,422,634
USAID Food and Related Assistance Worldwide to Date in FY 2008	$ 1,475,127,549
Additional USG Funding Announced on April 14, 2008	$ 200,000,000
Additional USG Funding Requested on May 1, 2008	$ 770,000,000

The new funding request and BEHT drawdown amount to nearly $1 billion in new funds to bolster global food security. And with other food security assistance programs already in place, the USG is now projecting to spend nearly $5 billion in 2008 and 2009 to fight global hunger.

Reform of Food Aid Delivery

As America increases its food assistance, it's really important that we transform the way that food aid is delivered. In my State of the Union address this year, I called on Congress to support a proposal to purchase up to nearly 25 percent of food assistance directly from farmers in the developing world. I ask Congress to approve this measure as soon as possible. It's a common sense way to help deal with food emergencies around the world.
President George W. Bush

Given the scope and urgency of the present crisis, the Administration has renewed its call for reform of the food aid delivery system.

That call was first made four years ago, when President Bush put a request into the fiscal year 2006 budget asking that $300 million be shifted out of P.L. 480 Title II and into the International Disaster and Famine Assistance (IDFA) account to be used as cash for meeting emergency food needs. This funding—a 25 percent cash option—would "permit USAID to provide food assistance in the most timely and efficient manner to the most critical emergency food crises….in those instances where the rapid use of cash assistance is critical to saving lives," the President explained.

What prompted the call for change is the length of time required and cost of shipping food commodities from the United States to an emergency site. Shipping in-kind assistance from the United States normally requires three or four months to arrive at an emergency distribution point once it is ordered. Having the option to purchase the food in the same country or region where an emergency occurs would provide flexibility to deliver food to hungry people faster. It would save lives and fill a critical gap until U.S. commodities arrive at the site. In addition to providing a faster option, local purchases of food will, in many cases, save money that would otherwise be spent on transportation costs, allowing purchase of additional food to assist more people.

Some of the same factors behind the spike in the price of food commodities are also pushing up the costs of ocean freight. As a consequence, price increases in commodities and transport are reducing the tonnage of food aid that donors can contribute to populations in need. Currently, the cost of freight for some commodities is

nearly as much as the cost of the commodities themselves.

Local purchase of food is not ideal for all situations, however, and will not support all U.S. food aid initiatives. The bulk of U.S. food aid must continue to be purchased in American markets, where the supply is assured and where large volume is needed, particularly if the present food crisis proves to be as general and prolonged as predicted. What is being sought is sufficient flexibility and new tools to meet the different kinds of food emergencies that exist today.

Near-Term Measures

While food aid can assist populations with emergency needs, such assistance is a limited resource and will not address all current needs and longer-term challenges. As a bridge to the funding that President Bush requested on May 1, USAID committed an additional $40 million to address the near-term impact of rising commodity prices and unanticipated food aid needs in Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Haiti, Bangladesh, Somalia, Mauritania, Uganda, and Sudan. WFP and various NGOs are distributing this assistance.

A number of measures in the longer-term U.S. Government agricultural strategy will see increased emphasis over the near term, including efforts to increase agricultural productivity, alleviate transport and supply-chain bottlenecks, and promote market-based systems. Programs to increase agricultural productivity will include increased support for local research on new technologies to grow staple foods and initiatives to build capacity of the private sector seed and fertilizer industry. To alleviate bottlenecks, U.S.-funded programs will focus on increasing access to finance and agribusiness services, expanding the agricultural trade and information network, and establishing a stronger trade infrastructure. A move to common regional seed laws is but one example of ways to rationalize a critically important market in the agricultural sector.

In March 2008, WFP issued a list of 30 countries where food security is threatened by price increases. Of these 30 countries, 22 are in Africa. Other organizations, including the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, have created similar lists. USAID's presence in more than 80 missions around the world puts it in a privileged position to monitor the food situation as it develops. The Agency will also utilize its Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) to monitor famine-prone countries.

Ben Barber/USAID

A few hours drive south of Cairo, Egyptian farmers now irrigate fields in minutes with simple diesel pumps instead of the slow animal-driven water wheels of the past.

Long-Term Strategy

I am confident we can stem and reverse the supply-demand imbalance that exists in food staples. We know how to do it—we know what works and what does not; we know that we must rely much more on the private sector and on broad alliances than was the case in the first Green Revolution.We have new tools, and we need to use them: markets, trade, and science will transform our approach.
Henrietta H. Fore,
Administrator, USAID
and Director of U.S.
Foreign Assistance

With the publication of USAID's Agricultural Strategy in 2004, USAID declared agricultural development a strategic priority. For the Agency that helped pioneer the Green Revolution 50 years ago, this strategy marks a renewal of its support for agricultural development and sets out guidance for its engagement in such efforts.

USAID's Agricultural Strategy focuses the Agency's agricultural development efforts in four strategic areas:

- Expanding global, regional, and domestic trade opportunities and improving the capacity of farmers and rural industries to act on them.
- Improving the social, economic, and environmental sustainability of agriculture.
- Mobilizing science and technology and fostering a capacity for innovation.
- Broadening agricultural training and education, outreach, and adaptive research.

In the years ahead, USAID seeks to take steps to reverse some alarming trends. For example, productivity growth in agriculture in developing countries has fallen from 3 percent per annum in the 1970s and 1980s to less than 1 percent today. Years of high growth and low prices resulted in reduced attention to and investment in agriculture, rural infrastructure, and markets. The President's emergency request seeks to reverse this by increasing agricultural investment by $150 million in fiscal year 2009, and working to leverage additional resources from the private sector.

Strengthening the capacity of countries and producers to increase their agricultural productivity will require the commitment of many partners. In addition to USAID's renewed commitment to agricultural development, U.S. business, science, and technology sectors, colleges and universities, and NGOs are being engaged to make use of their respective strengths and lessons learned.

Other countries have a role to play as well

President Bush declared his determination to take the lead in the fight against hunger, announcing that the Administration is:

- Working with other G-8 countries to secure commitments from their governments for additional food aid.
- Working toward the conclusion of a successful Doha Round agreement, which would reduce and eliminate tariffs, other barriers, and market-distorting subsidies for agricultural goods to make food cheaper and more available for consumers across the world.
- Urging countries that have instituted restrictions on agricultural exports to lift these restrictions.
- Urging countries to remove barriers to advanced crops developed through biotechnology so that more food can be produced for more people.

AFRICA

Electricity Brings Business and Safety to Southern Sudan

YEI, Southern Sudan—The end of Sudan's 20-year civil war following the January 2005 signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) created high expectations that peace would bring the people of Sudan development, stability, and security.

Since then, USAID has worked closely with the Southern Sudanese government to support initiatives that do just that, and the Yei Electrification Project was among the first. Today, children in Yei, a busy market town and trade hub near the border with Uganda and Congo, call electricity "CPA jahaa"—a Juba Arabic phrase meaning "CPA has come."

On May 29, officials from the United States and Southern Sudan joined residents of Yei to celebrate the completion of the first community-built and -operated electricity generation and distribution system in Southern Sudan. Salva Kiir Mayardit, president of Southern Sudan and vice president of the Republic of Sudan, presided over the opening ceremony. Thousands of people from around the area attended the event, and tens of thousands more lined the road to watch Kiir's convoy travel the two miles from the airport to the power station.

One woman said she walked a mile to be at the ceremony after she heard that the vice president was coming, and others said that the attendance of Kiir and representatives from the U.S. Embassy and USAID showed them that the event was of national importance.

Part of USAID's Southern Sudan Rural Electrification Program, the project effectively turned on the lights in Yei in October 2005, and has since trained Yei residents to build and operate a small utility. The training includes showing local crews how to erect electrical distribution lines, construct the substation, build the powerhouse, and operate and maintain the system.

Between speeches by Kiir, Southern Sudanese officials, and Acting U.S. Consul General Erin Tariot, dancers performed, reviving cultural traditions. In one dance, a woman held grass, a local symbol of light, and danced around Kiir to show that the community no longer had a fear of darkness. Later, children presented a poem equating darkness with a threat to life and equating light with peace. They also thanked the American people for bringing light to Southern Sudan.

Electricity has improved the quality of health care and other basic services, and has raised the standard of living for Yei residents. Working streetlights have been key in increasing public safety, reducing violent crime, and fostering business development.

A preliminary evaluation of the town center shows that crime has dropped from around 35 instances a night to one or zero. One local police officer called Yei's streetlights his best "nighttime friend." Streets that were once empty by 7 p.m. are now bustling well into the night.

More than 17,500 people directly benefit from the supply of electricity going to houses, businesses, health facilities, schools, police stations, local government offices, and other public institutions around Yei.

Roughly 80 percent of the cooperative's consumers are small commercial establishments which have used the electricity to expand operations, improve community services, bring in new products, and create new jobs. ★

MSI

Yei electricity cooperative employees perform maintenance on an electric pole.

LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

Conference Seeks to Protect Andean Amazon's Biodiversity

QUITO, Ecuador—More than 75 conservationists from the United States and five Andean Amazon countries met here May 19 to begin a five-day conference promoting conservation in the most biologically diverse region in the world—the Andean Amazon.

The Andean Amazon stretches more than 4,400 miles along South America's ridgeline from Venezuela to Argentina. It is home to abundant plant and animal life as well as hundreds of indigenous communities with centuries of traditional knowledge. This biodiverse habitat is considered by many scientists and environmentalists to be a linchpin to the health of the planet.

However, deforestation, farming, mining, and poorly planned infrastructure projects are destroying the region's biodiversity and threatening the livelihoods of local residents.

By increasing awareness of how sound management of natural resources is critical to development, the USAID-funded Initiative for Conservation in the Andean Amazon (ICAA) is making inroads in addressing these threats.

The initiative, slated to last through 2011, promotes regional conservation and economic development by strengthening environmental management, developing conservation alliances with the private sector, and improving the use of valuable natural resources.

Robert Goodier/Rainforest Alliance

Under the USAID-funded Initiative for Conservation in the Andean Amazon (ICAA), high quality coffee beans are grown in the shade of the tropical forest, providing an economic incentive to protect the forest.

Eco-tourism and other activities unite ICAA's goals of conservation and economic development so that the people who call this region home can develop and prosper.

The conference was hosted by ICAA which began in 2006 and brings together 20 public and private organizations working in the Amazon regions of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. Representatives from those countries and Brazil joined others here to share information about their activities and results, to strengthen collaboration among program partners, and to learn new skills related to private sector conservation alliances.

The conference included talks by ICAA partners as well as a panel of Amazon specialists who discussed sustainable economic growth, issues affecting indigenous people, and conservation opportunities from environmental services. The week included a field trip to the Cayambe-Coca Ecological Reserve and the Quichua community of Oyacachi in the upper Amazon River watershed.

Discussions also turned to the importance of globalization and biodiversity markets; the increasing role of the Amazon as a focus for payments for environmental services, including carbon markets; creative measures to adapt to climate change; and effective ways to integrate the voices of indigenous groups when shaping policy. ★

WHERE IN THE WORLD. . .

LATIN AMERICA CHIEF PAUL BONICELLI LEAVES FOR UNIVERSITY POST

Paul Bonicelli, assistant administrator of the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), recently left USAID to take on the post of Provost of Houston Baptist University in Texas. Administrator Henrietta Fore announced his then-pending departure April 22.

A few weeks later on May 8, his staff and other Agency colleagues threw him a party in the LAC offices, offering him an array of comical gifts such as a fake Nicaraguan voter card, an oversized military ID card, hats, a vest, and other symbols of adventures during his three-year term in the Agency. He also received a map of Latin America.

Bonicelli said he was used to the give and take of academia and said: "I never imagined working here would be the same way."

"The people have been a tremendous blessing. It was three years that had a tremendous effect on me."

Bonicelli was deeply involved in democracy programs in a region challenged by the rise of populist leaders such as Venezuela's Hugo Chavez, who capitalize on social and economic discontent to abridge democratic achievements.

Jose Cardenas, the LAC deputy assistant administrator, will serve as acting assistant administrator. ★

Paul Bonicelli, former assistant administrator of the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, received this map at a send-off party May 8 before departing the Agency for Houston Baptist University.

IN MEMORIAM

Alberteene Leach, 58, died May 28 in Washington, D.C. Leach joined USAID in 1978 as a secretary in the Bureau for Asia, later renamed the Bureau for Asia and the Near East. She continued her secretarial career for the Bureau for Europe and Eurasia, where she was promoted to administrative officer.

William Lowenthal, 87, died May 6 in Fairfax, Va. Lowenthal was a Foreign Service Officer and specialized in Latin American economic affairs during his 30-year career with USAID and its predecessor agencies. His assignments included deputy director in the economic development office in South America. Lowenthal, a U.S. Navy fighter pilot in the Pacific during World War II, also served as an economic development officer for the U.S. delegation to UNESCO (the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) in Paris, from which he retired in 1981.

Donald D. Shallow, 88, died March 27, in Santa Barbara, Calif. In 1954, Shallow joined the Foreign Service under the Marshall Plan through the U.S. Agriculture Department, and would eventually go on to join USAID after the Agency was established. His assignments included Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, and Washington, where he worked in the former Near East-South Asia Bureau. Shallow's career at USAID also included posts in Uganda, Tunisia, Haiti, Chad, and Italy. During World War II, he served in the U.S. Navy in Panama, the Aleutian Islands, and the South Pacific. ★

MAY 11, 2008 – MAY 24, 2008

PROMOTED

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ON THE CASE: Highlights of Recent Activity from the Office of the Inspector General

- **Islamic Charity Charged with Terrorist Financing.** An Islamic relief agency and several of its former officers were charged by a Kansas City federal grand jury with eight counts of engaging in prohibited financial transactions for the benefit of global terrorists. The indictment—which also charges a former U.S. congressman with money laundering, conspiracy, and obstruction of justice—resulted from an investigation by USAID's Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and other law enforcement agencies that are part of the Joint Terrorism Task Force.

  The indictment, which was handed down Jan. 16, alleges that the relief agency engaged in transactions that benefited individuals who have ties to al-Qaeda and the Taliban, and conspired with the former congressman to convert stolen federal funds into payment for the representative's advocacy on behalf of the charity. The indictment also alleges that the former congressman engaged in money laundering and obstruction of a federal investigation in an effort to disguise the charity's misuse of taxpayer money.
- **Suspicious Bids Kick Off Investigation.** OIG initiated an investigation in Iraq after reports that a grantee awarded several competitively bid tent procurement contracts to a single company. Documents showed that three Iraqi vendors submitted bids for all six available contracts. All the bids appeared to be identical—including formatting and wording—and included notably similar drawings of tents. The contracts came to $753,000.

  An OIG investigator in Iraq worked closely with the Iraqi Economic Crimes Division (ECD) on the case. This helped lead to an Iraqi judge issuing an arrest warrant through the Central Criminal Court of Iraq for an individual involved in the scheme. OIG continues to work with investigators of the ECD to bring the case to prosecution. In addition, OIG has three outstanding arrest warrants issued by Iraqi judges in three separate fraud cases in which Agency investigators are working jointly with the ECD.
- **Foreign Service National (FSN) Resigns in Lieu of Termination.** OIG received information that a USAID contractor operating in West Bank/Gaza received false or inaccurate information from a USAID FSN employee regarding one of its prospective subcontractors. An OIG investigation confirmed that the FSN employee was responsible for coordinating background checks of prospective funding recipients as part of USAID's terrorist vetting program. The FSN then

Streufert Named New Director of Security

USAID

Director of Security Randy Streufert

Randy Streufert was appointed director of USAID's Office of Security April 13. He is now responsible for overseeing a staff of roughly 176 direct hires, investigators, contractors, and members of the guard force that protects employees at the Agency's headquarters in the Ronald Reagan Building.

Streufert, who had served as acting director for five months before taking on the role formally, has 35 years of federal government experience. He joined USAID in 1984 and has held positions as deputy director, chief of personnel for the Information and Domestic Security Division, and chief of the Physical Security Programs Division. Early in his career with USAID, Streufert traveled extensively to missions in Asia, the Caribbean, and Central and South America providing on-site security support.

His federal service began in 1973 on active duty with the Army Security Agency at Arlington Hall Station, Va., which is now the home of the National Foreign Affairs Training Center. Streufert later became a civilian employee with the Army Intelligence and Security Command. In 1981 he moved to the U.S. Navy/Air Force Joint Cruise Missiles Project Office. There he served as a contracting officer responsible for the project's industrial security program.

Streufert holds a bachelor of arts degree in political science from California State University, Hayward. He is also a nature photographer whose work has been published in *Virginia Wildlife* and *Birds and Blooms* magazines. ★

AGENCY OBSERVES ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

By Mary Jane Cotter

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month was celebrated at the Ronald Reagan Building on May 13 by officials and staff from USAID and other federal agencies.

"Americans who trace their ancestry to Asia and the Pacific Islands have contributed much to our nation," said President Bush in a proclamation. "During Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, we highlight their importance to our great nation."

Nancy Yamada, mistress of ceremonies and reporter for 9NEWS NOW at WUSA 9, said: "Throughout our history, Asian Pacific Americans have made significant contributions to this nation. Asian Pacific Americans are leaders in public service, business, education, arts, athletics, and many other areas. The values and traditions of the Asian Pacific American community—love of family, hard work, entrepreneurship, excellence in education and community service—have helped unite and sustain this nation."

The keynote speaker at the event, sponsored by USAID's Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, was Frank H. Wu, professor and author of Yellow: Race in America Beyond Black and White. Professor Wu shared stories about his struggles growing up as a Chinese-American in the Midwest. His book examines the current state of civil rights in the United States as viewed by Asian Americans. Professor Wu mentioned that Asian residents will have a strong positive influence on the racial and cultural make-up of the United States in the 21st century. He challenged the audience to make good on our great democratic experiment.

Calligrapher and ink-brush painter, Bertrand Mao, demonstrated the art of Chinese lettering. The Japanese Choral Society of Washington, under the directorship of Ms. Kimiko Shimada, performed several Japanese opera pieces.

The importance of Asian Pacific Americans nationally is demonstrated by the following facts: (a) Asians number 14.9 million—about 5 percent of the U.S. population; (b) by 2050, there will be 33.4 million U.S. residents who identify themselves as Asians; (c) among Asians, age 25 and older, 86 percent completed high school, 49 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher, and 20 percent have a graduate or professional degree; (d) the median household income for Asian families is about $64,000; (e) Asian Americans owned 1.1 million businesses in 2002. ★

Larry Lavine/The Assignment Desk

USAID and other federal agencies observed Asian Pacific American Heritage Month at the Ronald Reagan Building May 13. Participants included, left to right, author Frank Wu, calligrapher Bertrand Mao, and reporter Nancy Yamada.

provided that information to prime contractors. However, on several occasions the FSN cleared the company for USAID-financed work despite multiple verbal and written warnings from USAID officials that there was derogatory information on the company. The FSN offered little explanation regarding his actions and resigned in lieu of termination. Neither USAID nor the prime contractor provided funds to the prospective subcontractor as a result of the FSN's actions.

- **Investigation Leads to Arrest of Relief Official.** In December, an arrest warrant was issued for a former financial director of a USAID-funded nonprofit foundation after he was accused of stealing U.S. program funds. The foundation supports, trains, and houses South American residents displaced by violence. OIG special agents made the arrest. According to the criminal complaint, the former official embezzled more than $214,800 and used the funds to purchase, among other things, a condominium and furniture for personal use. The embezzlement scheme went undetected because the financial director falsified information within the company's financial statements.
- **Investigation Leads to $1 Million Bill for USAID Contractor.** USAID has asked a U.S.-based contractor to refund the Agency just over $1 million because it failed to obtain a contracting officer's approval prior to arranging long-term leasing of non-U.S.-made vehicles, as the USAID contract had required. OIG's investigation uncovered that the contractor entered into the leases on a noncompetitive, exclusive basis without the requisite source origin waiver. ★

New Award Honors Employees for Security Efforts

USAID has created the Corbett M. Flannery Award to recognize employees outside the Office of Security who maintain the safety and security of USAID personnel working in areas with daily threats to security.

The new award is named for Corbett "Mike" Flannery, who was the Agency's director of security for more than 17 years before he retired in 2004. He died of colon cancer in 2005.

A popular boss to his staff and memorable personality throughout USAID, Flannery made a number of contributions that made the Agency safer. In announcing the award, the Office of Human Resources noted his "initiative, innovation, dedication, and professionalism in his relentless and exceptionally successful pursuit of making the Agency more effective and secure."

The Flannery Award is open to GS, FS, FSN, SES and SFS employees. The deadline for nominations is Aug. 1. Nominations must be submitted on electronic form JF-66—it is available at www.usaid.gov/forms/JF0066.pdf. For questions, contact Lynn Mason at (202) 712-1286. ★

EGYPT from page 6

developer builds 300 hotel rooms instead of the 1,500 that would accommodate mass tourism. The hotel owner then charges the visitors 300 Euro per night instead of 34 (about $361 versus $53)—making the total profit higher than the mass tourism approach. Ecotourism caters to tourists who wish to experience the natural, cultural, social, and historical features that travel destinations have to offer, and are willing pay more for the types of facilities and services that are required to deliver this experience.

If new tourism development isn't well-planned, environmentalists and others fear it will affect the health of the reefs and the people who depend on them for their livelihoods. ★

CONTINUED. . .

BORLAUG from page 1

told CGIAR it would cut funding by 75 percent in 2008—a cut that Agency officials said in May they were hoping to prevent.

Borlaug said new wheat varieties that resist wheat rust must also improve yields per acre if farmers are to be persuaded to switch to them: "If the seeds are just anti-rust, it will not be enough incentive for farmers to switch."

A canny political and social thinker as well as a plant scientist who has probably saved hundreds of millions of lives through his miracle wheat seeds, Borlaug told a *FrontLines* reporter in 2004 that he had to pressure India's government to adopt the Green Revolution.

Indian officials in the 1960s at first rejected his high yielding wheat. But after Borlaug persuaded rival Pakistan to try it, and then purchase a boatload of seed for wider use, India was forced to follow suit. Then India balked at building the fertilizer factories required to make the new wheat produce high yields. So Borlaug threatened to tell the New Delhi press corps that the government was killing the Green Revolution. The Indian government backed down and built the plants.

"You need to hold the politicians' feet to the fire," he told *FrontLines*.

Speaking at USAID this May, Borlaug said that to avoid a catastrophic virus attack on wheat farms around the world, "we need to replace the world's wheat everywhere." He said that the wheat he and his associates developed at CIMMYT years ago "took away the problems of wheat stem rust for so long—even in India—that people are complacent."

A new, more virulent strain of the rust virus emerged in Uganda in 1999 and is spreading northeast across Iran towards India and ultimately the United States and Canada.

"Wheat stem rust is an epidemic and could be the worst we ever had," he said.

Borlaug also noted that, even if one can solve the logistical difficulties of distributing new seeds to places as vast as India and remote as Afghanistan, there is a need to avoid chopping down forests and eroding soil through farming marginal lands. On the experimental fields at CIMMYT, a 45-minute drive from downtown Mexico City, young plant scientists trained by Borlaug are developing "zero tillage" methods of planting and cultivating crops so that top soil is not swept away by wind and rain.

Borlaug's colleague Christopher Dowswell said that, due to budget cuts, CIMMYT was half the size it was in the late 1980s, and noted that U.S. land grant universities that also do agricultural research have also been cut.

Borlaug said he supported wider use of genetically modified crops that can deliver higher yields without eating up more cropland and he accused opponents of the new crops of spreading "misinformation" that made people afraid to use them. ★

Harry Edwards, USAID

Acting Deputy Administrator James Kunder, left, meets with Norman Borlaug at USAID's Washington headquarters May 19.

GRASSROOTS from page 5

No Sectarianism's 13,000 members in Lebanon and in the Lebanese Diaspora, have appeared on major television talk shows and have won the support of prominent personalities.

USAID plans to spend $11.8 million on its efforts in Lebanon through the end of fiscal year 2008.

Support also goes to non-Lebanese NGOs like Catholic Relief Services (CRS). Enabling community members to take ownership of their projects is central to the grant activity, and CRS is partnering with two local nongovernmental organizations in the south—Development for People and Nature Association; and Nahwa al Muwatiniyya in the north.

Teams have received training in consensus building, negotiation, and conflict resolution. The teams conducted polling to identify community needs, organized fairs to highlight proposed ideas, and supported community members to create and implement projects.

"Many Lebanese are hungry for change, especially after the recent escalation of the political crisis into armed conflict," said Katharine Prud'homme, advisor to USAID's Lebanon project. "Although the Doha agreement between the country's feuding politicians has created a sense of optimism, Lebanese society is still very polarized.

"But there are also voices that are on neither side of the divide. What unites them is their commitment to a peaceful, democratic Lebanon with a culture of citizenship that transcends sectarian and religious divisions." ★

ELECTIONS from page 4

told *FrontLines*. Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki wants rolling elections over a number of days.

The provincial councils to be elected will nominate governors who previously were appointed by the Baghdad authorities. USAID is providing models of U.S. election laws and providing technical assistance to the election commission.

"We work with the United Nations—they are the lead on the elections and have the structure to advise the Iraqis," said Crowley.

The State Department is working with the National Democratic Institute and the International Republican Institute, which have provided election assistance in many countries. The U.S. military is working on election security.

USAID continues to work on capacity building—training and equipping Iraqi government officials to provide efficient services to the population—and agricultural activities. Crowley said cooperation with Iraqi ministries was improving, such as with the Ministry of Health, a former militia stronghold where "nothing was done" to help those in need. USAID has just signed an agreement to train staff at the ministry.

"Now it's changed and they try to take the job of the ministry seriously," said Crowley, a former mission director to Ukraine.

The Agency is also supporting the Community Stabilization Program, which is hiring people to clean up Sadr City. USAID is assisting people displaced from their homes by fighting over the past years through International Medical Corps, which supplies food and water.

The three top priorities for USAID now, said Crowley, are:

- help train middle managers in government to replace those who fled
- prepare to help train the incoming provincial councils who will have little experience in democratic governance
- expand the role of agriculture

Asked what he saw as the biggest change in the eight months he's served as mission director in Baghdad, Crowley said that a civilian surge took place while the military surge established greater security. He senses a shift from short- to long-term agricultural development.

But the mission will continue to focus on the Community Action Program—"developing the capacity of individuals to participate in their own development." ★

IRAQI JOBS from page 1

This USAID-military collaboration is the latest example of the previously estranged branches of government working together since 911: aid workers are now required to operate in insecure places and the military has come to view aid as a way to reduce the need to apply force.

Iraq's Minister of Industry and Minerals Fawzi Hariri told the press conference that an economic surge is taking place in Iraq. He said that at a recent Dubai conference, private investors pledged a total of $300 million to revive cement factories in Al Qaim, Anbar Province, and in Kirkurk.

State firms were the "cornerstone" of the Saddam Hussein regime, he said, and operated in construction, petrochemicals, engineering, textiles, food, pharmaceuticals, and heavy engineering.

"Our task is to move from state ownership to a modern … free market economy," he said. "We have achieved a great many results with the task force led by Mr. Brinkley."

Iraq is targeting foreign direct investment to "difficult" places such as Al Anbar, Basra, and Mosul where insurgents and militias have operated.

It is also offering to private investors shares in the state firms. Brinkley said his group has registered 3,000 Iraqi firms and is directing U.S. government contracts to them in an effort to jump-start the economy.

Hariri said it is a challenge to develop private enterprise since the private sector had been suppressed for decades. Some $5 billion has been allocated to build housing and other projects that will create 30,000 new jobs this year, he said.

Hariri praised the civilian-led Provincial Reconstruction Teams, which include USAID experts, "that are doing great service and give excellent advice."

USAID plays an important role with micro-loans to small and medium-sized enterprises," Harir told *FrontLines* after the press conference.

"There is a great benefit from the [USAID] programs. We need now to concentrate on capacity building—management skills are essential to sustain new ways of thinking. USAID programs are essential and I, as minister, would support it." ★

CONTINUED. . .

ASIA from page 6

And, if the baby got sick, Nafesa-hon wrapped Mamura in blankets and gave her herbal remedies. She didn't take Mamura to the doctor because she didn't believe it was necessary.

Things started to change when USAID and Project HOPE's Healthy Family project developed a brochure on child health called "If You Want Your Child to Be Healthy."

The Healthy Family project printed 35,000 brochures. Then visiting nurses trained in patient education by the project used the brochures to educate mothers with children under age 5, and left copies in homes as a reference for the entire family.

The project, which began in October 2002 in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan as an effort to improve maternal and child health, later expanded to Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan. By the time it ended in September 2007, the project had reached more than a million women of reproductive age and children under 5 in the four countries with a variety of efforts.

One of the visiting nurses trained in Uzbekistan came to Fazilova's house to talk about child health. Fazilova and her mother-in-law were eager to learn more about the proper way to care for an infant—they memorized the brochure's text and followed its instructions on caring for Mamura to the letter.

Instead of mutton and bread, Fazilova learned that exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months followed by continued breastfeeding until at least age 12 months is recommended. Tea for Mamura was off the menu since it can inhibit iron absorption and cause anemia.

The next time Mamura took ill, the women brought her to a health clinic immediately. A doctor advised the two that they could look after Mamura at home where the baby made a speedy recovery. Fazilova and her mother-in-law gave Mamura extra liquids and encouraged her to eat by coaxing her with her favorite foods—tips they had learned from the visiting nurse and brochure.

"If mothers and grandmothers know how to properly feed and care for children, they will use that knowledge in practice," said Fazilova's mother-in-law.

Throughout the Central Asia region, the Healthy Family project recruited and prepared thousands of volunteers to pass key health messages to their fellow community members; trained health workers at primary care facilities and maternity houses in a range of topics in maternal, child, and reproductive health; and introduced policy and regulatory reform to support the changes in health practices and to roll them out nationwide.

Some names in this article have been changed. ★

MACEDONIA from page 6

and Serbia, plans to open a new recycling plant in Skopje. Existing Macedonian companies are investing in improvements to production processes and expanding collection.

The project has completed its pilot phase, during which "ecological islands"—equipped collection sites where residents and businesses can dispose of plastic bottles—have been created in four municipalities. A public awareness campaign was also launched on the importance of plastic recycling.

As part of the campaign, on April 20, the city of Skopje, the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, and other partners celebrated Earth Day with an open-air festival in the City Square.

Another encouraging sign that environmental protection is taking root can be found in Macedonia's children. The project promotes recycling clubs in primary schools where students organize neighborhood clean-ups and other outreach events to educate their families, peers, and neighbors. Club members came to the Earth Day festival from all over Macedonia to showcase their activities and inspire other students to open recycling clubs in their schools. Fourteen clubs have been established to date.

The project is now entering its second phase, expanding from four to 26 municipalities across Macedonia. While response to the project from the government, the private sector, and the media has been overwhelmingly positive, sustaining the plastic recycling industry will require strong political will, market demand, and foreign investment. ★

REBUILDING from page 1

was in the 1990s.

"This is the first contingent of 40 and we will have four more of these groups this year," said Janet Ballantyne, a retired Agency counselor serving as a special advisor in increasing the Agency staff.

Each group will be kept at around 40 to allow them to get to know each other and form personal bonds that create teamwork.

"These new employees represent the start of our journey to rebuild USAID as the lead U.S. [government] foreign assistance agency for the 21st Century," said Fore.

The 16 men and 24 women include junior officers in program and project development; education; health; and crisis, stabilization, and governance. A few are mid-level legal advisors.

The positions were advertised on the Agency Web site and at career fairs around the country. Ballantyne said she'd also like FSOs returning on home leave to do recruitment. To encourage diversity and spur applications from people unable to afford to come to Washington for interviews, the Agency has begun paying the transportation and hotel costs for some applicants.

In Washington they faced a full day of interviews including a teamwork problem-solving session.

About 2,600 applied for the 200 positions, said Ballantyne, and these were boiled down to 300 eligible for hiring. Applicant requirements include U.S. citizenship, a master's degree, and skills specific to USAID's work.

Eighteen of the new FSOs had worked at USAID, 20 served in the Peace Corps, two were in Americorps, one was a Fullbright Scholar, four served in the U.S. military, and four were Presidential Management Fellows.

Twelve of the new hires speak Spanish, nine speak French, and three speak Arabic; others know Russian, Mandarin, Portuguese, Italian, German, Polish, Hebrew, Guarani Vietnamese, Bulgarian, Japanese, Moore, Nepalese, and Serbo-Croatian.

The new hires have worked in more than 30 countries. Their previous positions include crisis counselor, lawyer, social worker, election observer, reporter, writer, dolphin researcher, manager of safe house, Capital Hill intern, mountain climber, horticulture extension volunteer, and aides at the U.N. and Supreme Court.

Ballantyne noted that the Agency is holding "continuous open recruitment" to hire hundreds more FSOs this year and next.

She said that the Agency needs people with overseas, practical experience such as building latrines in the Peace Corps, rather than those with general degrees in international development.

"USAID has always been a very desirable place to work—some [of our new class] took significant salary cuts to come here," said Ballantyne.

If the new hires qualify in a language, they will be sent overseas in about four months. Others may take 22 to 44 weeks of language training at the Foreign Service Institute across the Potomac in Virginia.

Among their first training sessions in Washington, the new hires heard from four people who each served more than 30 years in the field, including as mission directors: Aaron Williams, George Laudato, Craig Buck, and Carol Peasley. They spoke about "the journey" that sprang from their careers. ★

FrontLines

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Coffee Production Jolts Women to Success in Post-Genocide Rwanda

By David Kampf

Under a USAID program, Epiphanie Mukashyaka was trained in the production of specialty coffee and managing a successful business. She now owns her own coffee company.

Professional coffee taster Eugenie Mukandanga evaluates 60 coffees a day. She advises coffee farmers on how to to ensure good taste, which helps maintain Rwanda's international reputation for high-quality coffee.

"It never occurred to me that one day I would be in my husband's shoes and go through the struggle of completely managing my own business," said Epiphanie Mukashyaka, 58, who lives in southern Rwanda.

Faced with the horror of losing their family members, women in this hilly, central African nation have often been forced to take over the financial responsibilities of their husbands and fathers after the Rwandan genocide in 1994.

Women have been able to find hope after tragedy by taking over jobs traditionally performed by men or new jobs essential for the country's economic growth. And in the process, they are leading Rwanda's economic development.

Mukashyaka, like thousands of women across Rwanda, lost her husband during the genocide and needed to find a way to earn an income to take care of her children.

"At first, I struggled because I lacked experience and was a woman," said Mukashyaka, who went on to receive assistance from USAID to start a successful career in the country's burgeoning specialty coffee industry.

USAID has provided technical and financial assistance to Rwanda's coffee industry since 2001, and in 2006 renewed its commitment to the industry's growth by funding Sustaining Partnerships to enhance Rural Enterprise and Agribusiness Development (SPREAD). It is a five-year project dedicated to improving the industry's links "from the seed to the cup."

USAID trained Mukashyaka in the production of specialty coffee, introduced her to coffee buyers, and gave her ideas for creating and managing a successful business.

With her willingness to learn and ability to make wise investment decisions, Mukashyaka quickly moved up the ranks of the coffee industry. She now owns her own coffee company, Bufcafe, which helps her provide for nine children.

"Women can handle the same jobs in coffee as men," added Godeliva Mukamana.

Mukamana became a coffee farmer when she was married in the 1980s, but her family was displaced during the genocide. After her husband died in the Kibeho refugee camp in 1997, she returned home and began farming again, taking over her husband's responsibilities. With the success of her farm, she is able to take care of her five children who "have never slept on empty stomachs."

Women are not limited to the jobs previously held by men. "I didn't have money in 2002," said Eugenie Mukandanga, a 24-year-old student and cupper, or professional coffee taster.

With USAID support, U.S. and European experts train cuppers in Rwanda to taste and recognize the characteristics of good coffee. This helped Mukandanga get a job, and she says she is "independent now"—able to pay her own school fees in addition to those of her younger sister and nephew.

"Women can handle the same jobs in coffee as men," says coffee farmer Godeliva Mukamana. Over 40 percent of Rwandan businesses are run by women.

Mukandanga evaluates 60 coffees a day. Afterwards, she advises coffee farmers on how to use manure and pesticides to ensure good taste, which helps maintain Rwanda's international reputation for high-quality coffee.

"We can't deliver bad coffees to our customers," she said. "We always remove coffees with defects."

"Each woman tastes nearly 5,000 coffees every year and without talented and qualified cuppers, Rwanda's producers will not be able to ensure great-tasting coffee and interest from international buyers," said Ryan Washburn, USAID's acting director in Rwanda. "Rwandan coffee is world-renowned largely because there are talented cuppers, and these women will be essential for the industry's continued development."

Export revenue from specialty coffee grew from zero to $8 million in five years due in large part to USAID's assistance.

According to the World Bank, over 40 percent of Rwandan businesses are run by women and Rwanda enjoys the third highest percentage of women entrepreneurs in Africa. Only Ghana and Cape Verde have more women actively involved in the business sector.

The role of women is rising in politics as well as business: nearly half of Rwanda's parliamentary seats are held by women—the highest proportion in the world. Social Watch, an international NGO dedicated to gender equality, ranks Rwanda in the top five on its gender equity index.

With 60 percent of Rwandans living on less than $1 a day and nearly nine in 10 relying on less than $2 a day, the empowerment of women will be needed to reduce poverty.

Edwige Musabe and Eugene Kwibuka contributed reporting from Butare, Rwanda. ★

All photographs courtesy USAID/SPREAD