USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

FRONTLINES

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Photo by Nev Broadis, Wildlife Alliance

Rescued from wildlife traffickers, this slow loris now resides in a Cambodian sanctuary.

Thailand is rounding up illegally traded animals—and their sellers—with help from USAID. See pg. 16.

FRAMEWORK OBJECTIVES:

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Photo by Michael George, USAID

Administrator Henrietta Fore, center, and Cisco Systems CEO John Chambers (in blue shirt) survey damage at Xuankou Middle School, Sichuan Province, China, following May 12 earthquake.

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Food Sent to Fight Hunger As Drought Hits Horn of Africa

Nearly 16 million people in the Horn of Africa face hunger from food shortages, according to USAID and international officials.

Food insecurity in Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia results from drought, a spike in global food costs, civil unrest, and the devaluation of local currencies. In response to this crisis, USAID is sending emergency funding, manpower, and food.

As of June 20, USAID and the State Department had contributed over $519 million to the Horn of Africa states since October.

"We must never lose sight of the terrible human cost of hunger," Administrator Henrietta Fore told Congress in May. "Even short-term hunger can unalterably affect a child by exposing him or her to disease, threatening normal cognitive development and life-long productivity, or tragically, even early death."

The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, based in Rome, reported that global costs of staple foods such as wheat and rice increased by 43 percent since 2007, adding to the difficulty people have in providing their families with enough to eat.

Food prices are expected to stay high at least until 2015,

HORN OF AFRICA FOOD CRISIS IMPACT AND INITIATIVES

	Total Population*	Population Affected** (Estimated)	% of Total Population Affected	USAID Funding*** (in thousands)
Ethiopia	78,254,090	10,400,000	13%	$319,632.2
Kenya	37,953,838	1,200,000	3%	$67,215.8
Eritrea	5,028,475	1,700,000	34%	$1,906.4
Somalia	9,558,666	2,600,000	27%	$124,449.9
Djibouti	506,221	284,000	56%	$814.5
TOTAL	131,301,290	16,184,000		$514,018.8

Sources: *CIA July 2008 population estimates, **U.N. agencies, ***USAID

see **FOOD** on page 14 ▶

Legislators Join Experts in Call For Overhaul of U.S. Foreign Aid

U.S. Congress members Howard Berman, Nita Lowey, and Chuck Hagel joined foreign aid experts on Capitol Hill June 10 to urge a major overhaul of the U.S. foreign aid system.

They called for more aid funding, rewriting of the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act, and ending "fragmented" aid programs.

The aid experts in the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network, who sponsored the hearing, noted that 23 government agencies carry out foreign aid in addition to USAID. They called for creation of a Cabinet level Department for Global Development. The aim is to make foreign assistance of equal importance with diplomacy and defense in America's foreign policy.

In a proposal titled "New Day, New Way," the experts also called for bringing all foreign aid by various branches and agencies under one roof.

Rep. Howard Berman (D-Calif.), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said there is general agreement that foreign assistance mechanisms are "fragmented and broken," and noted that "calls for foreign assistance reform are at an apex."

Berman said he wondered how U.S. missions overseas could coordinate the separate aid programs run by USAID, the State Department, the Millennium Challenge Account, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief program, and others. He also said that the Defense Department now carries out about 20 percent of U.S. foreign aid, but that "our civilian agencies and their civilian partners must be the face of America around the world, not the military."

He said he planned to overhaul the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act that created USAID under

see **LEGISLATORS** on page 15 ▶

When Aid Is Blocked, Can Nations Intervene?

When does the world intervene?

Cambodia? Rwanda? Burma?

This was the question on the table when USAID, State, and NGO experts spoke to a Senate panel June 15 in the wake of Burma's refusal to allow international aid to reach more than a million survivors of Cyclone Nargis.

An unknown number of Burmese have probably died as a result of the military junta's refusal to allow U.S., French, and other international aid to be delivered from military ships anchored offshore, Acting Deputy Administrator James Kunder told the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on International Development, Foreign Assistance, Economic Affairs, and International Environmental Protection.

"Humanitarian access in some emergencies is not as free

see **AID** on page 14 ▶

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.

Excerpts from the introduction to *The Rise of Global Civil Society*

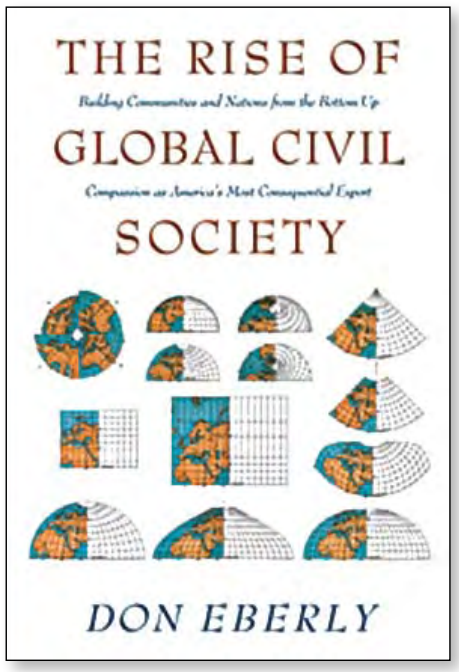
By Don Eberly

You are probably among the millions of Americans who are concerned about global developments and about America's place in the world. Leaders and citizens alike want to know whether attempts by American citizens and their government to promote democracy and free enterprise are having any positive effect.

The news is dominated by terrorism and extremism, as well as a bungled and seemingly open-ended conflict in Iraq. Is there any good news anywhere? America's reputation abroad, we are reminded again and again by ubiquitous polling, is at an all-time low, and many citizens are embarrassed and frustrated by the fact that a country so closely identified with the highest democratic ideals could be so unpopular in so many places. Why, they ask, are we so broadly despised?

Given the tumultuous conditions in many regions of the world, many have come to doubt that efforts to improve the lot of humanity in the Third World can succeed in the face of sectarian conflict, Islamic radicalism, and anti-Americanism. Perhaps we should just return home and concentrate on building secure borders.

Many others, however, sense that behind the more troubling news there may be a promising new global era emerging, although they are uncertain what form it is taking and how it will affect them as Americans. Globalization, for good or bad, is shifting the tectonic plates. It is also bringing innovative approaches to advancing democracy and confronting poverty.



Conventional efforts by elite policy experts and bureaucracies to bring about prosperity in the 20th century have mostly failed. As a result, confidence in "top-down," bureaucratic solutions is declining, while confidence in "bottom-up" innovation by business and nonprofits is growing. The 21st century will see more social entrepreneurship, private philanthropy, public-private partnerships, and grass-roots linkages involving the religious and civic communities. There will be less of the traditional approaches to "helping," and more partnering with and empowering of indigenous institutions. The key to meeting development challenges in the future will be to harness the best of both the public and the private sector so as to foster experimentation with approaches that rely on markets and on civil society, and that engage the poor as partners.

The work of building and maintaining the democratic state must involve citizens operating in their own communities. This book examines recent efforts by policy leaders in Washington to transfer more responsibility for social welfare to local and nongovernmental institutions. Private voluntary organizations, faith-based partnerships, and a proliferating array of NGOs—aided by communications technology and unprecedented mobility—are spreading real capacity as well as the norms of civic community and private enterprise around the globe.

In the new era, business too has an expanding role in generating technical innovations that are directly and powerfully beneficial to the poor. American business ingenuity will help the poor in the most remote Third World villages.

In the midst of these promising trends, there is also much to be sobered by, especially the problems that arise from ethnic and sectarian division. In the Arab Middle East and other traditional Muslim societies, there is a resurgence of tribalism and identification with religious factions. Dozens of nations are at or near civil war conditions.

In this context, the rush to democratize strikes many as misguided. Democracy cannot be instituted simply by forcing elections on nations that remain in a state of underdevelopment. Moving hastily to achieve the symbolically satisfying results of an election can even produce "illiberal" outcomes. Genuine democracy is not possible without democratic citizens. Moreover, the experience of recent years suggests that the U.S. government is ill positioned to push democracy on a reluctant world. The institutions and values of democracy are most likely to advance through the continued outflow of assets from the American private sector, including business, civic, philanthropic, academic, and faith-based organizations.

Reprinted with permission of Encounter Books (February 2008).

Don Eberly has over 25 years of public policy experience, and has served as senior counselor for international civil society at USAID, and as director of private sector outreach and coordination for tsunami reconstruction at the State Department. He served for two years in Iraq, first as a senior ministry advisor in Baghdad immediately following the invasion, then as director of social policy and private assistance for Iraq at the Pentagon and State Department. For his service in Iraq, he earned the most distinguished medal for civilian service under joint military-civilian command. At present, he is an independent consultant working on business and government projects. ★

AGENCY ASSISTS CAMBODIA IN COMBATING AIDS, TRAFFICKING, CORRUPTION

The rate of HIV/AIDS prevalence in Cambodia has fallen by half in recent years—from 2 percent to 0.9 percent of the population—due in large part to USAID programs in this Southeast Asian nation of 14 million, said USAID Cambodia Mission Director Erin Soto. To maintain this success, USAID supports prevention programs that target high-risk groups that often transmit the disease to lower-risk groups.

On a visit to Washington June 12, Soto called the reduction in the AIDS rate "the major accomplishment" of U.S. assistance in Cambodia over the past 10 years. "Cambodia is one of the few countries in the world able to turn the tide of AIDS," she told *FrontLines* in an interview.

Cambodia's success mirrors similar declines in AIDS rates in Thailand in the 1990s after senior Thai government officials launched a public information campaign to convince all patrons and staff in brothels to use condoms.

USAID's mission in Phnom Penh also helped Cambodia reduce trafficking in persons, for sex and for labor, by setting up a task force linking 200 NGOs and 14 government offices.

In an effort to increase public awareness and improve coordination between the national and local levels, USAID helped launch a communications campaign with karaoke songs and public service announcements that told people trafficking is a community issue. USAID also assisted with the establishment of the country's first-ever national data collection mechanism on trafficking and sexual exploitation, which will help create better policies to meet needs on the ground.

Cambodia adopted comprehensive anti-trafficking legislation this year, contributing to a U.S. decision to remove the country from the Tier 2 Watch List in its 2008 Trafficking in Persons Report. USAID is now supporting the training of judges and prosecutors on implementing the new law.

Corruption is another major problem in Cambodia. For example, it is not uncommon for some government officials to demand under-the-table payments for services that are supposed to be free. USAID supports 40 local anticorruption NGOs and has trained journalists on how to report on corruption in Cambodian society. In addition, USAID is partnering with the government of Cambodia to increase transparency and efficiency within government institutions.

The USAID mission is reprinting articles from the press on corruption and sharing them with key government officials to make them more aware of the issue. It also runs quarterly political polls that include questions on corruption and land-grabbing. Poll results are now being shared with the Cambodian government.

USAID's programs in Cambodia average around $55 million to $60 million each year, most of which is spent on health, including AIDS. ★

Mission of the Month

Photo by USAID/Peru/Mype Competitiva project

At the Peru Moda 08 event, Peruvian Minister of Trade Mercedes Araoz (center, holding clothing), is flanked by USAID/Peru Mission Director Paul Weisenfeld (left, in blue shirt) and a small business entrepreneur (right, who produced the alpaca knit garment) trained by the USAID/Peru/Mype Competitiva project.

Peru Works to Comply with New Trade Pact

Challenge

Following months of negotiations between the U.S. and Peruvian governments, Presidents George W. Bush and Alan Garcia signed the Peru Trade Promotion Agreement (PTPA) Dec. 14 in Washington. It has been hailed as a model for future free trade agreements due to its inclusion of environmental and labor issues.

The Agreement requires Peru to enforce international standards in trade-related matters. In order to meet the PTPA's requirements, Peru needed to strengthen the Ministry of Labor's inspection capacity and enhance the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises to ensure that the benefits of free trade reach the country's poor and excluded populations.

Innovative Response

Passage of the PTPA was a top priority of the Garcia administration, which took office in 2006, and political will has become key to maintaining momentum.

"The last six to seven years of economic growth have been extraordinary, but Peruvians were initially slow to believe that things were changing," said Paul Weisenfeld, USAID's mission director for Peru. "In my short time here, I've seen a huge shift from pessimism to enormous levels of optimism and people now believe that the country is poised to take its place on the global stage, ready to play in the big leagues with other countries in the region like Mexico and Chile."

Taking advantage of the national mood—and the Peruvian government's urgency to address labor issues—the mission funded a study that identified the most important challenges facing the Ministry of Labor: undersized staff, lack of clear regulations regarding inspectors' authority, and the need to train inspectors on the new labor law to better serve as advocates of fundamental labor rights.

In response, the government of Peru tripled the number of labor inspectors in the Ministry's inspections division.

USAID then designed and carried out an intensive training program focusing on ethics, planning, and management tools for the new inspectors. Many of the new inspectors are women and the majority will serve outside of the capital city, in the provinces where enforcement of labor regulations has been historically low.

Inspections are directly related to the labor issue, mission officials explained. To the degree that Peru becomes known as a place with straightforward labor laws and enforcement, investment increases.

PERU

And, when labor laws are enforced, employee productivity improves. That, in turn, could lead to even more exports.

Results

USAID support to the Peruvian government's efforts to make small and medium enterprises more competitive is starting to grab headlines in newspapers and radio broadcasts that reach people throughout the country.

USAID is working directly with producers in sectors that have high export potential—through trade fairs and other direct assistance—to build up their businesses and international reputations.

For example, the Agency provided design, management, and marketing assistance to 23 small textile firms and 21 small silver jewelry producers who participated in "Peru Moda," a major trade fair that put 400 Peruvian textile and jewelry companies in front of 500 wholesale buyers from 20 countries in late April.

Several buyers from the United States indicated that they chose to come to Peru in search of new product lines because of the trade advantages the PTPA offers, as well as Peru's emerging reputation for quality products at competitive prices in the textile and jewelry sectors.

When the PTPA enters into force, these firms and thousands of other small-scale enterprises will be able to export and take full advantage of the benefits that the trade agreement provides.

Peru is expected to satisfy the PTPA's requirements for entry into force by November when President Bush visits the country for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, or APEC, meeting. Estimates suggest that the PTPA will add 1 percent to Peru's GDP per year, or approximately $1 billion, and create 50,000 new jobs annually. ★

INSIGHTS

FROM HENRIETTA H. FORE

In my confirmation testimony a year ago, I made clear what was to be my number one priority for the Agency. As I said then: If USAID is to make its contribution to the success of the United States' foreign assistance and foreign policy missions, first and foremost, we must replenish our core workforce.

My commitment to rebuild and re-staff the Agency was formalized in what has come to be called the Development Leadership Initiative (DLI), a five-year plan that will double the size of the USAID Foreign Service (FS) by fiscal year 2012. I want to report to the readers of *FrontLines* the progress we are making to meet that commitment.

In May, I was pleased to greet 40 new FS entrants, part of as many as 210 new officers that we hope to bring into the Agency by the end of fiscal year 2008 in September. For fiscal year 2009, USAID is requesting $92.1 million to implement DLI, which will increase our FS workforce by an additional 300.

It is personally gratifying to see the support that DLI has garnered within the Administration and Congress, as well as with our implementing partners.

In a legacy essay she recently penned in Foreign Affairs, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice sees the promotion of democratic development as remaining "a top priority" for the United States because "there is no realistic alternative that we can—or should—offer" for dealing with troubled regions around the world. This means a robust role for foreign assistance as "one of our best tools in building democratic institutions and strengthening civil society." And it means strengthening the ranks of USAID, as reflected in the President's budget request.

Her sentiments were seconded by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates in a groundbreaking address at Kansas State University last November. "One of the most important lessons of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan," Secretary Gates stated, "is that military success is not sufficient to win: economic development, institution-building and the rule of law, promoting internal reconciliation, good governance, providing basic services to the people, training and equipping indigenous military and police forces, strategic communications, and more—these, along with security, are essential ingredients for long-term success."

What Secretary Gates was describing was the gritty, day-to-day programming that USAID is implementing as core features of its mission.

Similar support for upgrading USAID and expanding its workforce has consistently been voiced in Congress. Simply put, our message is getting heard and this should be seen as a great vote of confidence in the future of the Agency.

As Secretary Rice sees it, the 300 new hires that the DLI envisions are part of a new "foundation" for the Agency that "those who follow must build on." ★

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS

CARE ENLISTS IN WAR ON POVERTY

WASHINGTON—When CARE, one of the largest U.S. NGOs, held its national conference in the Ronald Reagan Building June 18-19, its president, Helene D. Gayle, announced a plan to work to cut world poverty in half by 2015.

"We've got seven years," she told the audience, noting that "as a world we are still striving for basic human rights" such as the right to food, water, and health care.

CARE—which stands for Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere—was formed to assist displaced persons after the end of World War II and for 60 years has been working throughout the world on humanitarian, development, and emergency tasks.

The U.S. government provided $242 million in foreign assistance to CARE to carry out development and relief programs in 2007—a bit less than half the $604 million budget of the NGO.

U.S. funding to CARE—which came mainly from USAID—fell about $50 million since 2007 when CARE decided to stop accepting food aid that would be sold abroad. CARE instead decided to focus on traditional fund-raising to provide the money for development projects. Some aid groups and experts have long contended that the sale of food aid to fund development is too costly—especially since transport costs are going up—and also tend to depress farm markets abroad, hurting local farmers.

Gayle said the CARE agenda this year would focus on four tasks:

- Increasing the power of women through safer childbirth, girls' education, financial aid, and ending gender-based violence.
- Fighting hunger with emergency aid as well as going beyond relief.
- Reducing the impact of climate change on the poor.
- Modernizing the outdated foreign assistance system.

And although CARE's principal donor, USAID, is barred from lobbying Congress, the private voluntary agency is not; and its two-day meeting was geared to send members up to Capitol Hill to advocate for increased foreign aid and key aid policies.

"This year we will push for the International Violence Against Women Act" aimed to halt attacks on women around the world, said Gayle. Two other issues will be lobby topics as well—hunger and capping greenhouse gas emissions.

Gayle said there are 30,000 lobbyists in Washington, but only 50 work full time on global poverty.

She noted that after the previous year's lobbying push, the House approved $34 billion in foreign assistance. She indicated that she felt the lobbying was successful in obtaining congressional support. ★

Bush Says Civilian Aid Fights Terror

President Bush issued a strong call on June 5 for renewed foreign assistance by USAID and other branches of government as a way to build up freedom as a bulwark against extremism.

"A lesson we've learned is that civilian expertise is vital to strengthening the institutions of freedom," Bush said, citing the Provincial Reconstruction Teams staffed by USAID, the State Department, and the military in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Speaking at the ground-breaking for a new $185 million headquarters of the congressionally funded U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP), at Constitution Avenue and 23rd Street overlooking the Lincoln Memorial, Bush said foreign aid to promote democracy would combat terrorism.

"It requires using the power of liberty to marginalize extremists. And the best way to do so is to use our national resources to strengthen the institutions of freedom," Bush said.

"Freedom helps supplant the conditions of hopelessness that extremists exploit to recruit terrorists and suicide bombers," Bush added. "People who live in liberty are less likely to turn to ideologies of hatred and fear…"

The president pledged support for the basic elements of USAID programs around the world: democracy promotion, a vibrant free press, independent judiciary, a free enterprise system, freedom to worship, education, health care, and women's organizations.

Bush praised the U.S. Institute of Peace, established by Congress as a think tank during the Cold War to advance democracy. These days it works in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other countries. The new building is to rise on the south slope of Navy Hill, across the street from the State Department, where many USIP staff including its president, Richard Solomon, served long careers.

Bush said that his administration is "transforming America's capabilities to help poor and struggling societies become healthy and prosperous" and he cited the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the President's Malaria Initiative, and the Millennium Challenge Account. These programs "deserve to be fully supported by the United States Congress," he said.

The president also cited efforts to create a rapid civilian response to emergencies and to strengthen "emerging democracies" while "under fire from terrorists."

Bush said that political and economic progress requires security, citing U.S. support for security in Colombia "that helped rescue that country from the brink of becoming a failed state." And he noted that the United States, through the Global Peace Operation Initiative, has trained more than 40,000 international peacekeepers and plans to train another 75,000.

Non-governmental organizations or independent groups such as the U.S. Institute of Peace can go into countries where it's harder for governments to operate, Bush said.

"The work of democratic development is the great cause of our time, and we shouldn't shy away from it," he said. ★

JUNCO THE CHIMP BRINGS TOURIST DOLLARS TO UGANDA

KANIYO PABIDI, MURCHISON FALLS CONSERVATION AREA, Uganda—Junco poses for six eco-trekking tourists as he stuffs his face with figs from a tree.

He is the alpha male of the 50 friendly chimpanzees in this section of the Budongo Forest Reserve. And a growing number of tourists are pouring foreign exchange into the local economy for the chance to spend an hour with Junco and his friends.

Last year, over 3,000 tourists visited the Kaniyo Pabidi Chimp Trekking facility, before it was officially opened, demonstrating the tourism potential of this unique site. With a 90 percent chance of viewing chimpanzees here, Kaniyo Pabidi is a magnet to tourists willing to trek to see the great apes in their native habitat instead of inside a zoo.

Administrator Henrietta Fore took part in the opening of the chimp trekking facility in Budongo Forest during May. Also on hand for the opening was U.S. Ambassador Steven Browning, USAID Assistant Administrator for Africa Kate Almquist, and USAID/Uganda Mission Director Margot Ellis. USAID contributed $300,000 to the public-private partnership with the Ugandan National Forestry Authority, the Walt Disney Company, Jane Goodall Institute, and Let's Go Travel.

The eco-tourism site includes a new visitor reception center, cabins for tourists, improvements to 20 kilometers of trekking trails, habituation areas for chimpanzees in the forest to enhance viewing by tourists, and improvements to the Busingiro Environmental Education Center.

"Uganda is a country with incredible natural beauty, biodiversity, and tourism potential," said Fore.

The eco-tourism facility will generate approximately $350,000 to $400,000 per year from trekking and tourist accommodation fees. It is an example of how biodiversity conservation activities can contribute to economic growth and local businesses while conserving a threatened great ape, the chimpanzee.

Chimpanzees, and a highly threatened great ape, the mountain gorilla, live in Uganda's portion of the Albertine Rift Ecoregion, one of the most biodiverse, yet threatened, regions of the continent. Both great ape species have been targeted for tourism activities in Uganda and generate significant resources for the Ugandan protected area system and for the local communities that live on the front line of protected areas.

"Frontline communities tend to pay the high cost of conservation, and frequently do not benefit from protected areas," said Jody Stallings, USAID/Uganda's environmental officer.

"Ecotourism, and the resulting revenue sharing from these programs, can have a big impact on these communities, and can help to conserve these critically endangered species."

Uganda's State Minister for Environment, Jessica Eriyo, said, "The government is fully committed toward conserving natural forests and their biodiversity to improve prospects for tourism services."

The Budongo Forest also provides incentives such as employment and education to the local people living on the forest borders. Other indirect benefits for locals will include the sale of handicrafts and foods to the new tourism centre.

USAID is currently working on another public/private partnership with a Ugandan tourism firm, African Wildlife Foundation, and community organizations to develop a mountain gorilla eco-lodge in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park. That eco-lodge is scheduled to open in July. ★

Briefs

No Second Wave of Deaths After Burma Cyclone

BANGKOK—A U.N. agency report on Burma released June 18 stated that, about six weeks after Cyclone Nargis killed 77,000 people and left 56,000 missing, there have been no major outbreaks of disease and that fears that salt had tainted rice fields are proving to be exaggerated.

While the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said some 52,000 farmers in the Irrawaddy Delta will be unable to grow a 2008 rainy season rice crop unless they get farming equipment and seed, FAO consultant Albert Lieberg predicted at a news conference in Bangkok that the rice shortfall would be just 2 percent.

Sea water flooding of rice paddies receded within 12 hours of the storm surge, said Lieberg, and the salt left behind was diluted because the soil was wet before the storm and heavy rains after the cyclone were cleansing.

Lieberg said 30,000 people involved in fishing activities had died as a result of the cyclone.

Though supplies of food and shelter remain short, there apparently has been no "second wave" of deaths due to disease, malnutrition, and exposure after the original casualties caused by the storm.

By June 12, U.S. assistance to Burmese survivors of Cyclone Nargis reached $38 million, despite severe limits by the Burma (also called Myanmar) government on access by international aid experts to the affected areas of the Irrawaddy Delta.

The U.S. assistance included food, water, shelter, and other aid that was flown in from U.S. stockpiles in Thailand and delivered by NGOs from the Rangoon airport to nearly 500,000 people.

A USAID assessment team conducted a rapid appraisal of Dedaye, Pyapon, Pathein, Bogale, and Labutta townships in Ayeyarwady Division June 3 and 4 and reported farmers were unable to plant rice seeds in time for the upcoming growing season as 85 percent of arable land was either flooded or not yet plowed.

U.S. Convoy Stoned in Lebanon After USAID Project Visit

WASHINGTON—A Lebanese guard working for the U.S. Embassy in Beirut was slightly hurt when Hezbollah supporters stoned a U.S. motorcade June 18 in the south Lebanon village of Nabatiyeh, State Department deputy spokesman Tom Casey said.

Casey said the incident happened after one of the cars broke down and a village family invited the U.S. charge d'affaires, Michele Sison, to have lunch with them. It was Sison's first visit to southern Lebanon since she arrived in the country in January.

The U.S. group had been visiting U.S.-sponsored initiatives and programs to include a school for girls, a social center, and USAID projects.

Around a dozen individuals—mainly young men—"started throwing some stones at the vehicles" after the car was repaired and the motorcade prepared to depart, Casey said.

The area is dominated by Hezbollah supporters.

Indonesians Often Fail to Complete Immunization Series

The majority of Indonesians have access to routine immunization, but ensuring repeated visits to obtain full and accurate vaccination remains a challenge, according to a nationwide immunization survey.

The recently released survey results show almost 79 percent of Indonesians have some degree of immunization against diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), and tetanus. However, this number drops to 65 percent when considering the full series needed for protection.

A number of reasons for this "dropout rate" were also identified by the study, including: lack of information for mothers on when to return for follow-up vaccines; the absence of growth monitoring cards which track a child's development and immunization history; and illness of the child at the time vaccines were to be administered, which prompted some practitioners to turn children away.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation's Indonesia Immunization Project (MCC/IIP), the World Health Organization, and UNICEF, supported the survey, which provides the most accurate picture of immunization coverage in Indonesia in many years.

"For more than 20 years Indonesia has been without valid and precise data [specifically] on immunization coverage," said Dr. Jane Soepardi, national immunization program manager. "This survey helps to correct that."

In addition, by providing province-specific data, the survey allows MCC/IIP to hone improvements to immunization in Indonesia and overcome barriers specific to certain locations.

A total of $55 million will be spent in Indonesia to support the MCC Threshold Program, which is administered by USAID. MCC/IIP will spend $20 million over two years to provide technical assistance to the Indonesian government's Expanded Program on Immunization. The balance of the funding for the MCC Threshold Program is focused on anticorruption activities. For more information, go to http://indonesia.usaid.gov/en/Program.8.aspx.

70 Nations Pledge $16B to Afghanistan

PARIS—Representatives of 70 countries meeting in Paris June 13 pledged $16 billion in aid for Afghanistan.

First Lady Laura Bush said the U.S. administration would ask Congress for $10.2 billion over two years. She had recently met Afghan women and said many "live in fear of a return of the Taliban."

Britain pledged $600 million, Japan $500 million, Germany $420 million, Australia $235 million, and France $165 million. The Asian Development Bank offered $1.3 billion while the World Bank offered $1.1 billion.

Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai had sought $50 billion in development aid over five years.

Administrator Henrietta Fore told reporters in Paris that much aid remains in the pipeline because the bidding process was slow, and aid was often not ready to be received. After Paris, however, Ms. Fore said more aid will "flow directly" through the government. "There's a sense that aid should be coming through the Afghan government, and as many ministries as possible," she said.

William Wood, U.S. ambassador, told reporters U.S. funds will be prioritized on energy, agriculture, and 2009 elections.

U.S. Ambassador Goldberg Attends Washington Consultations

U.S. Ambassador to Bolivia Philip S. Goldberg returned to Washington for consultations in the wake of protests at the U.S. Embassy June 9.

In a press release, the State Department expressed appreciation to the Bolivian National Police in protecting the Embassy and its personnel. But it also voiced concern about Bolivia's commitment to protect diplomatic staff and facilities in the future.

President Evo Morales said that the June 9 protest was not an attack on the Embassy, but rather a "reaction by the people" to U.S. policies. The Bolivian president added that he believes President Bush should call USAID officials to Washington to explain what Morales alleges are conspiratorial actions against his administration.

On June 17, Morales criticized farmer groups in the Yungas region for working with USAID. He reiterated accusations that USAID was financing a campaign designed to overthrow his administration. USAID pulled out of Caranavi in 2006, due to lack of physical and legal security, but its work supporting the annual Coffee Cup of Excellence has benefited many coffee growers in that region.

After 100 Years, Water Chlorination Still Spreading

WASHINGTON—This year marks the United States' 100th anniversary of using chlorine to purify drinking water, reported the Voice of America June 12. In 1908, Jersey City, N.J., became the first U.S. city to use chlorine in drinking water.

In celebration of this centennial anniversary, USAID and the American Chemistry Council (ACC) have teamed up to help provide safe drinking water to three West African countries—Ghana, Mali, and Niger.

The World Health Organization says 1.1 billion people worldwide do not have access to safe drinking water and that diarrhea, a disease caused by unsafe water and inadequate sanitation, kills nearly 2 million people each year.

ACC is committing $200,000 toward the $1.3 million partnership.

Jim Kunder, acting deputy administrator of USAID, said: "Where you don't have piped water system, we've got to rely for safe drinking water on chlorination right at the household level. And what has happened is these American chemical companies have developed very low cost family doses of chlorine, which can be added to the family water for a day or couple of days to make sure that the water is safe and avoid diseases."

USAID is already working in 11 countries in West Africa on clean water programs. ★

THE REGIONS

ASIA

After Years of Conflict, Sri Lanka Dairy Production Grows

A dairy farmer in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka, transports his milk to the rehabilitated milk chilling center in Vellaveli.

Photo by USAID

BATTICALOA, Sri Lanka—Dairy farming once thrived in Sri Lanka's Eastern Province, but milk production has declined due to decades of conflict and lack of technical support for dairy farmers. Daily milk collection in this area has decreased from 106,000 to 33,000 liters a day since 2003.

In 2007, the Sri Lankan government introduced post-conflict recovery measures across the Eastern region, including strengthening livestock-based industries such as dairy farming.

To help develop the regional economy, USAID rebuilt a milk chilling center in Batticaloa District that had been destroyed during hostilities in 1990. The facility serves as a central location where dairy farmers can sell their raw milk directly to milk processors. The absence of processing facilities at the regional level is one reason for the drop in production in recent years.

The $238,000 effort, carried out by the NGO World Concern in partnership with the state-owned Milco Private Ltd., has improved the livelihoods of 2,000 dairy farmers. In the process, it has built confidence and restored a degree of normalcy to this conflict-affected area.

"The dairy sector holds great promise for improving the livelihoods of thousands of Sri Lankan farmers throughout the island, especially those in the former conflict-affected areas of the East," said Michael E. Hess, assistant administrator for USAID's Bureau of Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance, who inaugurated the milk chilling center May 21.

While commending Milco "for its support to conflict-affected farmers in difficult times," Hess emphasized that "in order to be sustainable, the dairy sector in Sri Lanka needs more private investment, as only increased competition will lead to increased milk production and eventually increased prices for farmers."

So far, the project has helped build 40 cattle sheds and five milk collection points, provide 300 milk cans, and train 160 farmers in feeding technologies, animal health, and business planning. Eight new networks of Farmer Managed Societies have also been formed. These groups enable farmers to sell their milk directly to the chilling center, avoiding middle men and maximizing their take-home income.

"Dairy farmers in the Batticaloa area are now receiving up to 34 rupees (approximately 30 cents) per liter for their milk. This is more than double the price they achieved before joining the Farmer Managed Societies," explains Rhumi Jauffer, executive director for Milco. His company owns the milk chilling center and supports approximately 1,900 Farmer Managed Societies across Sri Lanka.

According to World Concern statistics, total milk production in the target area is now at least 50 percent higher than during the same time period of the previous four years. ★

MIDDLE EAST

Lebanese Views of U.S. Assistance Improve After Ad Campaign

This is the billboard design that was used in USAID/Lebanon's media campaign. The text across the top (from right to left) reads: "For Hope, for Life, for Lebanon." The text in the bottom right says: "From the American people to the Lebanese people." The billboard was designed by Memac Ogilvy & Mather.

BEIRUT—The bright advertisements featured students, women entrepreneurs, farmers, and others—all from USAID projects.

The imagery focused on faces and emotions, moving from close-ups to panoramic shots. It was accompanied by sweeping music and a voice-over that told viewers USAID had been by their sides since 1951.

The ads were part of a campaign called "For Hope, for Life, for Lebanon." It was an emotional approach that tested extremely well in the focus groups. Participants, representing all political and economic backgrounds, described the advertisements as joyful and optimistic. Many expressed surprise: "I didn't know they did all that."

The campaign ran on almost all of Lebanon's major television and radio stations for 30 days in December 2007. Billboards supporting the campaign were posted around the country, with attention to areas where USAID was either least-known or least-liked. Printed advertisements also ran in the major daily newspapers in French, English, and Arabic.

"People need to know this and to see the results we see here," said one participant during a focus group in October 2007, held to test USAID's new advertising campaign in Lebanon.

Despite more than 50 years of work in Lebanon and $1.5 billion in assistance, USAID's efforts received little recognition, according to polls conducted in the spring of 2007.

The U.S. foreign aid program averages $40 million a year and currently is even higher now with the addition of reconstruction funds after the 2006 summer conflict between Israel and Hezbollah. Criticism in the media of USAID's activities was usually high, reflecting in part heightened tensions in the country at a time of political uncertainty. This had a negative effect on USAID's work as the mission had to spend time responding to questions, often based on inaccurate information.

With the support of the Bureau of Legislative and Public Affairs, USAID's Lebanon mission embarked on an intensive media blitz to increase awareness of

see **LEBANON** on page 14 ▶

AFRICA

Books Help Madagascar Teachers Train Students

ANTANANARIVO, Madagascar—USAID and two U.S.-based foundations have donated $1.9 million in books and other educational materials to schools, education centers, and universities on this Southern Africa island nation.

Books for Africa and Brother's Brother Foundation donated six containers of books and other supplies, while USAID's Africa Education Initiative helped cover shipping costs and distribution to regional education offices in the country.

The official hand-over ceremony on May 19 at the Madagascar Ministry of National Education underscored the importance of the learning materials in helping Madagascar meet Education for All (EFA) targets, country officials said.

EFA is an international effort to expand educational opportunities for children and adults by 2015. To back the initiative in African nations, USAID in 2002 created the Africa Education Initiative (AEI), an eight-year, $600 million investment to help 18 countries meet their EFA targets. By the time it ends, the initiative should have provided 550,000 scholarships to African children, trained nearly a million teachers and put 15 million textbooks and other learning tools in the hands of children.

Madagascar's leaders say that education is one key to its continued growth and its efforts to reduce poverty among its 19 million inhabitants, nearly half of them under age 15.

Despite huge gains in making primary education more accessible, about 10 percent of school-age children do not attend school. And those who begin school don't always finish. Learning conditions are sometimes less than optimal with crowded classrooms, lack of trained teachers, or insufficient textbooks. Some families cannot afford basic school supplies and materials, or require their children to help with farms and businesses or to look after younger siblings. For every 100 children who enroll in first grade, only 30 make it to fifth grade.

The donated books improve teaching and promote learning in English.

Early in 2007, English was voted in a referendum as Madagascar's third official language, and is valuable in Madagascar's growing trade with countries in the Indian

see **MADAGASCAR** on page 14 ▶

Photo by Jocelyn Rakotonoely, U.S. Embassy

Left to right: UNICEF Resident Representative Bruno Maes, Vice-Minister of Education Ying Vah Zafilahy, U.S. Ambassador Niels Marquardt, USAID Mission Director Gerry Cashion, and Director of Secondary Sector, Ministry of Education, Marson Raherimandimby peruse new books distributed to Madagascar's schools. USAID and two foundations donated $1.9 million in books and other educational materials to the island nation.

LATIN AMERICA

Garbage Recyclers Hook Higher Incomes in Paraguay

ASUNCION, Paraguay—For the "gancheros" who live off salvaged garbage, recycling is a way of life.

Named after the large hook—or "gancho" in Spanish—which they use to forage in trash piles, gancheros live in and off landfills undertaking back-breaking recycling work amid difficult, sub-human conditions.

The metropolitan landfill near Asuncion, which services 1.2 million people, is home to 1,200 gancheros who survive on what they scavenge and sell to formal recyclers.

see **PARAGUAY** on page 15 ▶

Photo by GEAM/ Rosa Palazon

"Gancheros" outside of Asuncion, Paraguay, separate recyclables at the sorting center located next to the landfill. A USAID-funded program is raising the quality of life of the 1,200 gancheros by providing them training, equipment, and services.

EUROPE & EURASIA

Bulgarian Cities Open for Business

By Jennifer Croft

SOFIA, Bulgaria—As the USAID mission in Bulgaria prepares to close in September, the local governance reforms it had worked on have begun to take root.

In the mid-1990s, Bulgaria was emerging from Communist rule and struggling with the challenges of democracy and decentralization of its industries. In 1997, the mission arranged for U.S. and other foreign government professionals to visit Bulgaria to train local officials so municipalities could attract and retain businesses and create jobs.

The ICMA CityLinks program was launched to help link Bulgarian and U.S. cities in order to draw on U.S. economic development and marketing experience.

An infrastructure management partnership between the Bulgarian city of Veliko Turnovo and Golden, Colo., for example, was replicated in 10 other Bulgarian cities. The cities of Veliko Turnovo and Plovdiv assessed 10 bridges and developed financial plans for their maintenance and replacement. In waste management, a pilot composting program in three cities was replicated in 19 additional municipalities.

A conference in February on local economic development attracted over 180 participants from Bulgaria's government, private, and education sectors as well as international representatives. Their discussions contributed to the formulation

see **BULGARIA** on page 15 ▶

Photo by Galya Yotova

The installation of new streetlights and sidewalks in Veliko Turnovo, the result of a partnership between city authorities here and in Golden, Colo., have made the city more appealing to tourists and businesses.

GLOBAL HEALTH CONFERENCE DRAWS WORLDWIDE EXPERTS

Photo by Ben Barber, USAID

A large screen projects the image of USAID Administrator Henrietta Fore as she addresses conferees at the Global Health Council Annual International Conference in Washington May 30. The meeting included dozens of workshops and lectures devoted to issues such as primary health care, TB, malaria, water, and communications.

Photo by Ben Barber, USAID

This USAID-sponsored clinic in Yemen provides a young medical technician with access to modern lab research equipment.

HISTORY

The Global Health Council Annual International Conference, which commemorated its 35th anniversary this year, brings together health workers, advocates, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), industry, and government to share knowledge, experience, and lessons learned.

The conference grew out of a 1970 task force created by the American Medical Association (AMA) to allow NGOs to pool resources to combat major health issues. The AMA subsequently established the National Council for International Health (NCIH), later renamed the Global Health Council (GHC).

The conference grew from a poll conducted by a task force of health care practitioners working overseas. The most commonly expressed desire was for increased communication in developing innovative approaches to major health threats. From modest beginnings in 1973, the annual GHC conference grew to more than 3,000 attendees by 2008.

A coalition of 500 organizations and 5,000 individuals in more than 140 countries, the Council is now the world's largest membership alliance dedicated to saving lives by improving health throughout the world.

WASHINGTON—Administrator Henrietta Fore told a major conference of international health experts and organizations that USAID will keep on working with them to improve delivery of medical care and improve the health of the world's poorest people.

"Millions are alive and healthy because of the work you and your colleagues do each and every day," Fore told the Global Health Council (GHC), composed of hundreds of health groups—many of them supported by USAID.

"Much more remains to be done," she added. "Every one of us can be catalysts and incubators for change and I am confident you will take up the challenge."

She shared the podium on May 30 with World Health Organization Director-General Margaret Chan; Nils Daulaire, former USAID senior health officer and now GHC president; and Jaime Sepulveda of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

In addition to Fore, the Agency sent dozens of speakers and attendees to the conference.

Booths offered information on health projects—from AIDS relief to family planning to childhood nutrition, with many of the publications bearing the USAID logo, indicating Agency funding.

"Through thick and thin we have continued our engagement with USAID," said Daulaire in an interview, "even if [USAID] funding for the conference came to an abrupt end in 2004." Since then the Council has found other sources of funding for the conference from the Gates Foundation and other donors.

"Our members who are on the frontlines of global health need to hear from the most significant contributors to their work, in substance and financially," said Daulaire. "USAID and PEPFAR [the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief] need to be included in our programs each year."

The annual meeting included dozens of workshops and lectures devoted to issues such as primary health care, Kenya's health, TB, malaria, women's health, water, communications, and training.

For example, a USAID-supported project in Afghanistan created a nationwide health care system for the first time, at a cost of only $4.50 per person, said Bill Newbrander of Management Sciences for Health, at a packed conference workshop.

BASICS—Basic Support for Institutionalizing Child Survival—was able to drastically reduce infant mortality in a country that had "horrific" death rates before 2002, under Taliban rule, he said.

The USAID project set up a care system formed by: health posts, basic health centers, comprehensive health centers, and district hospitals. Each level was trained to give basic care and send on complex cases it could not handle to the next level.

Now, 80 percent of the rural population has access to health care—up from 10 percent in 2001—said Newbrander, who serves as technical director of the project. There are 700,000 visits each month to health care facilities, now mainly run by Afghan NGOs.

"Our signal achievement is the truly dramatic increase of recognition of the vital importance of global health—10 years ago it was a sideline but now it is seen as vital in development and international security," said Daulaire.

The U.S. government increased funding for health from less than $1 billion 10 years ago to $6.5 billion today, he said, noting that "we applaud" White House efforts to make the fight against malaria and AIDS vital U.S. interests.

However, he said he was concerned that by pouring money into health, money might be cut from social and economic development, especially agriculture.

And he warned that the health portfolio itself could become unbalanced with HIV/AIDS "getting the lion's share of resources."

"The foundation of good health is maternal and child health and family planning—these have languished relative to AIDS funding," he said.

The 35th annual international conference held by the GHC drew 2,500 participants. Daulaire said that if he had more money for scholarships to bring health experts from the developing

Photo by Eka Pesvenidze, USAID

Merab Kintsurashvili from western Georgia was eager to use the "warm chain" technique to keep his newborn daughter protected from the cold after her delivery by Caesarian section. The technique helps to prevent hypothermia in newborns—a major cause of neurological disorders in Georgia. Newborns are immediately wrapped in a blanket, hat, and socks, and then placed on the mother's bare chest for two hours to avoid heat loss. In the case of a Caesarian section, the father can participate in the process.

countries, "we would have had another 1,000 people here—real frontline people."

"The conference is one of the most efficient ways to transfer knowledge and experience—real work takes place in the workshop and panels—people share success and failures. Connections made here are more than meeting old friends—they link NGOs and major international organizations."

WHO leader Chan, speaking after Fore, said that "health is a driver of the economy—a social asset."

"I was in Afghanistan and saw how USAID scaled up the health system in a hurry—training a lot of illiterate women to provide services."

She said that such a system fit well with her agency's decision to restore the importance of primary health care around the world, where more than 1 billion people have no service at all. ★

Photo by USAID/India

Dr. K. R. John of the USAID-supported Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore, examines a Thirumullaivasal woman who suffered physical and psychological trauma when pinned under a wall during the December 2004 tsunami.

Photo by Rebecca Gustafson, USAID

A clinic worker fills out an intake form before examining a patient. The clinic was set up by USAID partner CIES to serve families in temporary shelters constructed after flooding in Trinidad, Bolivia.

Photo by S. Moumtzis

Sgt. Innocent Birinda is tested for HIV at Kinigi, Rwanda, where a mobile counseling and testing unit has been set up. This mobile unit was set up to respond to the needs of the military who are often posted in remote rural locations with no access to health facilities.

Photo by USAID/Iraq

Patients wait to be seen at the Al-Hajaj Health Clinic in Kirkuk, Iraq, which was renovated by International Medical Corps through a USAID grant.

WHERE IN THE WORLD. . .

Photo by Matthew Johnson, USAID

The first 40 USAID Foreign Service Officers hired under the Development Leadership Initiative (DLI) are pictured above on their swearing-in during May. They graduated from their introductory course June 20. The second class, which was sworn in during early July, is now undergoing training. Two hundred USAID Foreign Service Officers are expected to be hired this year—part of an expected total of 1,000 new hires over the next three years (see *FrontLines* June 2008, pg. 1). Also pictured, Acting Deputy Administrator James Kunder, far left; Agency Counselor Lisa Chiles, far right; and Administrator Henrietta Fore, center.

MAY 25, 2008 – JUNE 7, 2008

PROMOTED

Keisha L. Foster
Contract Specialist

Khem R. Gurung
Contract Specialist

Veronica Hartanto
Accountant

Paulette E. Lester
IT Project Manager

Abdus Samee
Auditor

REASSIGNED

Timothy H. Anderson
Afghanistan/OA to Indonesia/BHS

Aleksandra Braginski
E&E/EA to Afghanistan/OSSD

Bishop Buckley Jr.
HR/TE to HR/PPIM

Warren J. Harrity
COMP/NE/OJT to RDMA/PDO

Sean Huff
COMP/LWOP to Albania

Erik G. Janowsky
LAC/RSD to Peru/OHR

Allan E. Reed
Sudan/OSSP/DG to COMP/Separation

Joel B. Sandefur
Iraq/OMD to SA/RLO

Heather Smith
Nicaragua/HI to Afghanistan/OSSD

Jene Clark Thomas
Afghanistan/PFNP to Colombia

Susan M. Thomas
Mozambique/AM to M/OMS

Mark A. Webb
SEC/PIDS to SEC/OD

RETIRED

Sheryl J. Grossman

Joan M. Silver

MOVED ON

Gerald A. Cashion

Corina R. Gardner

Michael D. Johnson

George E. Lewis

M. Lee McBrearty

Elizabeth A. McKeon

IN MEMORIAM

Amedee 'Meddy' S. Landry, 90, died Jan. 25, in Rochester, NH. He worked as a chemist and public health Foreign Service Officer at USAID's predecessor agency, serving more than 30 years in Peru, Bolivia, and Vietnam. After retiring, Landry volunteered his time as a board member of the Rochester Visiting Nurse Association. ★

Study Assesses Democracy Assistance

By David Black

There are countless anecdotal stories by those who say USAID improved their family's lives and helped their countries.

However, gathering measurable evidence that aid was effective has been more elusive, particularly for U.S. assistance aimed at democracy, civil society, governance, and human rights.

The National Research Council (NRC) of the National Academy of Sciences recently convened a group of leading experts in democracy promotion and evaluation to examine current USAID practices and provide recommendations for evaluating the effectiveness of assistance programs.

On May 9, the NRC unveiled the results in Washington before approximately 100 representatives of USAID partners, international development organizations, academia, and the federal government. The report, "Improving Democracy Assistance: Building Knowledge Through Evaluations and Research," acknowledges efforts already taken to monitor and evaluate the impact of democracy promotion programs, but includes specific recommendations for further improving those efforts.

"USAID is serious about improving the effectiveness of its democracy and governance programs," said Elisabeth Kvitashvili, who spoke at the event and is the deputy assistant administrator for USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance.

The Office of Democracy and Governance has already begun to implement some of the recommendations in the NRC report. Those steps are consistent with priorities laid out by USAID Administrator Henrietta H. Fore, who has stressed the importance of improved monitoring and evaluation as an Agency objective.

To read the full report, go to www.nap.edu. ★

PROMOTING INDEPENDENT MEDIA: STRATEGIES FOR DEMOCRACY ASSISTANCE

By Krishna Kumar, Lynne Rienner Publishers (2006)
A book review by John S. Waggoner

Krishna Kumar's *Promoting Independent Media* (2006) is a timely and important book discussing one of the most powerful of development tools—the media—and how U.S. and other aid programs have encouraged, supported, and promoted it around the world.

According to Kumar, there is a distinct lack of literature on international media assistance. "There are no books, doctoral theses, or even research articles in professional journals analyzing the subject and the possible effects of media aid." The "origins of the book" is to fill this obvious gap.

In the past, development efforts focused on media as a tool for achieving specific development goals in agriculture, health, or education. Now media assistance projects focus on the structure and journalistic practices of the media itself. Such assistance seeks to lay the foundations of a media sector free of state editorial and financial control so state authorities may be held accountable and citizens are provided an arena for an open and respectful exchange of ideas.

Many factors brought attention to media development. A major impetus came from the collapse of the Soviet Union. The former captive nations of East Europe, which longed to join the ranks of liberal democracies, served as laboratories for various media development strategies. The tragic events of Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia demonstrated the central role that state controlled media played in fueling ethnic hatred and violence. Further, the information revolution that is transforming the global economy underscored the critical role the media plays in economic growth. And lastly, interest in media development has been stimulated by the war on terrorism and the democracy deficit in certain countries that both repress the media and put it to use to deflect criticism to the West.

The investment in media assistance programs includes USAID and its sister development agencies in Britain, Canada, and Sweden, as well as a broad array of international donors, and many large and small private foundations. Total spending is significant, estimated at $600 million to $1 billion dollars since 2003. There is currently a shift of focus from former communist bloc countries to Middle East countries, where some "innovative programs" are being designed to enlarge the space for independent electronic and print media.

The focus of media assistance programs has varied, according to country, donor, and perceived opportunities. Broadly speaking, programs supported are designed to improve journalistic skills, promote the economic viability of media

Photo by Ben Barber, USAID

enterprises, and strengthen the institutional infrastructure for media, including legal and regulatory reform as well as promoting the transformation of state-owned enterprises.

Kumar's book attempts to explain and evaluate the significance of this media assistance programming. It presents case studies drawn from all the regional bureaus of USAID, including countries in Central America, Russia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Indonesia, Afghanistan, and Sierra Leone.

Kumar's study is well-written and richly detailed. It is a compendium of experience in media assistance programming that can serve us in the future. Appropriately, the book concludes with a series of recommendations that draws upon this experience and that can serve the international community in the years to come.

This is an important book, engaged in an enterprise that will likely assume an increasingly central role in the design of development programming. ★

Krishna Kumar is a senior social scientist with the State Department's Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance.

Photos by Ben Barber, USAID

Afghans are trained to report, research, write, and broadcast news though USAID-funded programs that began shortly after the overthrow of the Taliban and the establishment of a new Afghan government in 2002. Working with Internews, the Institute for War and Peace Reporting, and other NGOs, USAID has trained hundreds of journalists, helped set up dozens of radio stations, assisted television stations, and worked with the Afghan government to support and protect a free press in a country with little experience in frank and sometimes controversial reporting.

IN HOUSE NEWS

Your Voice

By Richard Nyberg

Your Voice, *a continuing* **FRONTLINES** *feature, offers personal observations from USAID employees. Richard Nyberg served as a development outreach and communications specialist in Senegal from February 2004 to July 2008. His account below resulted from a one-day stint as an insecticide sprayer.*

Excusez-moi, Monsieur: Can I Spray Your House?

Richard Nyberg, left, takes a turn fighting mosquitoes with indoor residual spraying in northern Senegal.

Photo by Cheikh Sadibou Diatta, RTI

Moussa Gueye invited me, a complete stranger, into his home in the village of Mbagam in Senegal. But the walls of his concrete-block abode were bare and all his belongings were heaped up high outside in the middle of the dusty courtyard. It was not the time for the mint tea he offered; I was there on a mission with a 33-pound weapon strapped over my left shoulder.

My host didn't seem to mind the intrusion, though, as I was using insecticide to help drive out—and keep out—malaria-carrying mosquitoes.

It was my turn to suit up like the scores of Senegalese trained under the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) to carry out indoor residual spraying and do battle against malaria, one of the West African country's top killers.

Sporting high rubber boots, thick overalls, rubber gloves, a face mask and visor, topped off by a helmet, my uniform felt heavy and clumsy. But my functional garb kept the insecticide off my skin. It also effectively trapped the heat my body was producing as the clock approached noon in the Sahelian heat.

Carefully coached by my group supervisor, Khoudia Sall, I watched, learned, and sprayed. Pumped to 50 pounds per square inch, my tank of insecticide weighed heavy on my shoulder as I pulled the trigger and tried, as best I could, to stay exactly 45 centimeters from the wall. On the user side of a sprayer, maintaining that distance proved harder than I thought it would be—a task for a steady hand with good depth perception and plenty of practice.

Everything seemed to go well on the wall I sprayed, but, of course, my instructors were quick to correct and improve my performance.

The hardest part was trying to peel off the gloves so I could take photographs and jot down notes. I got it somewhat wrong, but the kind people of Mbagam were quick with some soap and water so I could rid myself of any stray residue.

The lesson for me: Better leave the spraying to the pros. And for good reason. I worked on one room of one compound and already felt a bit stiff and lopsided, owing to the weight I was carrying. On average, each of the 17 sprayers on my team treats 25 rooms a day.

For that day, I worked among the second group of sprayers taking aim at northern Senegal's ubiquitous mosquito. A previous team treated Moussa Gueye's house 10 months earlier, with good results.

see **YOUR VOICE** on page 14 ▶

IN HOUSE BRIEFS

ACVFA Meets in Atlanta

USAID's Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACVFA) held its spring public meeting in Atlanta June 4 at the Commerce Club—the first outside of Washington, D.C., in several years.

Some 17 committee members met with representatives from such organizations as the Aga Khan Foundation, CARE, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Georgia State University, MAP International, Project HOPE, Coca Cola, Booz Allen Hamilton, and the Federal Reserve Bank.

The morning session opened with recorded remarks from Administrator Henrietta Fore who emphasized the role of private-public partnerships.

Acting Deputy Administrator James R. Kunder spoke about humanitarian intervention and the role of information technology.

Small group discussions reported out conclusions, including the need to increase awareness about the positive effects of foreign assistance through new forms of social media such as Facebook and Flicker.

Agency Seeks Surge Capacity Volunteers

The Agency is seeking all categories of USAID personnel, located in the United States or abroad, for an Agency-wide surge capacity initiative.

The goal is to prepare staff to deploy overseas in crises and to contribute to the U.S. Government's reconstruction and stabilization (R&S) activities. This may include response to state failure or to complex humanitarian crises.

The Agency call June 11 stated that USAID will create a roster of volunteers who could be called upon to support activities initiated by USAID as well the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS).

Volunteers could work in Washington or overseas. Expertise is sought in democracy, governance, health, agriculture, economics, contracting, finance, travel, legal, project design, project, management, and other areas.

Volunteers will become USAID's first cadre of officers to support S/CRS' Standby Reserve Corps (SRC). This initiative is not meant to fill current positions in critical priority countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and Sudan, which will continue to be filled through current procedures.

For further information, see USAID general notices for June 11 or contact Elisabeth Kvitashvili at (202) 712-0197. ★

Sarah Moten Awarded Honorary Doctorate of Laws

Sarah E. Moten

Sarah E. Moten, education division chief at the Africa Bureau, was awarded an honorary doctor of laws May 30 at the University of Massachusetts in Boston.

"You manage technical, community, and educational assistance programs of nearly one billion dollars," said a citation from the university presented to Moten.

"You are a paradigm-making public servant, renowned for your wise leadership in the fields of diplomacy, education, refugee affairs, population issues, women's and children's issues, economic development, and environmental policy."

Moten earned a doctorate in education, administration, and supervision from Clark Atlanta University, a master's degree in education, guidance, and counseling from George Washington University, and a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Hampton University.

The University of Massachusetts citation said that Moten had an "uncanny ability to navigate the political waters of Washington, D.C., moving from a Democratic administration to a Republican administration yet keeping the interests of African educational development central in your mission and agenda."

Moten previously won awards from Swarthmore College, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Department of Energy, and from the Refugee Program of the Department of State. ★

TRANSPORTING COOKING OIL FROM THE U.S. TO CHAD: THE 15-MONTH ODYSSEY OF ORDER # 81707503

KOLOMA, Chad—May 21, 2008—An elderly woman sits under one of the few scrawny trees in a parched landscape as she and 8,000 other displaced people wait for aid workers to begin handing out some 100 tons of flour, salt, sugar, and cooking oil.

The woman's name is Hawa Brahim and the displaced site is Koloma, near the town of Goz Beida in Chad's southwest.

Brahim tells IRIN [Integrated Regional Information Networks] she has no idea how the food arrived here.

"They bring it; we eat it," she said. "All I know is that back in my hut I have 10 hungry mouths that need feeding," she said.

Photo by Heba Aly, IRIN

Hawa Brahim waits for her name to be called during food distribution at Koloma.

More than 50,000 tons of international food aid finds its way to this remote region each year to feed hundreds of thousands of Sudanese refugees and displaced Chadians. But how does it get there?

The process starts by identifying the need, then designing a food aid package, requesting donations, purchasing the food, transporting it, assessing its impact, reporting back to donors, and doing it all over again.

At each stage there are complications, World Food Program's deputy country director in Chad, Moumini Ouedraogo, told IRIN.

"People don't understand how it works, not even our partners," he said."[They think it is as if] you are walking into a shop and buying a few cans [but] it's not like that at all. It's a very long process."

The time it takes between when a donor decides to donate food and the moment the recipient receives it can take more than one year.

Order # 81707503

The cooking oil Hawa Birhim is about to receive in Koloma started life more than 15 months earlier, when USAID's Food for Peace Director Jeffrey Borns sat in his office in Washington, D.C. and signed Order # 81707503 for a total of 925 tons of the oil.

About a month later, the U.S. Department of Agriculture tendered a bid to fill the order.

It was eventually filled by a supplier in Chicago who had to repackage the oil in specially marked silver cans with the word "USA" written on them.

Meanwhile, USAID made a separate tender for transport companies.

After three months, Order # 81707503 left the United States, passing from Chicago through three transit points before arriving at the port in Norfolk, Va., where it was loaded into two giant container ships.

The first port of call was Algeciras, Spain, where the cooking oil was unloaded and reloaded onto two smaller vessels.

One month later Order # 81707503 reached Africa.

But it was now sitting in the port of Douala in Cameroon, whereas the old woman was sitting under her tree in eastern Chad, some 2,235 km away.

It would take another 11 months before the oil reached her.

Railway Segment

On a Saturday afternoon in the World Food Program (WFP) office in Chad's capital, N'djamena, cigarette butts were collecting in a cup on the desk of the head of logistics as he tried to figure out how to get various food aid shipments from Douala to what is pretty well the dead center of Africa.

Photo by David Hecht, IRIN

The port in Douala.

Photo by Heba Aly, IRIN

A 25-ton truck carrying food aid for displaced people in southeastern Chad has mechanical problems.

The many problems the logistician, Henrik Hansen, faces could be summed up in two words: "Transport capacity," he said.

Cameroon has a railway on which WFP moves food aid north towards Chad, but it is painfully slow and inefficient and only goes 930 km, as far as the town of Ngaoundéré.

It took roughly a month for Order # 81707503 to be cleared from the port, loaded on to railway carriages, and fitfully moved up to Ngaoundéré in two separate batches.

And Order # 81707503 still had 1,200 km left to go.

Over-the-Road Segment

In theory, Hansen said he knew of some 6,000 trucks that could make the road trip, but most of them were falling apart and the rest were hard to get hold of as WFP had to compete for them with various commercial enterprises and other aid agencies.

The trucks were sometimes hijacked or drivers got nervous and would decide to turn back, he said. There were constant mechanical breakdowns, last minute cancellations, and troubles with local authorities.

Order # 81707503 finally left Ngaoundéré in two truck convoys passing into Chad, then continuing a further 900 km to the town of Abéché, the humanitarian hub in eastern Chad. The first convoy took three weeks; the second took almost a month and a half.

Once in Abéché, the order was stored in WFP's central depots, then divided up, ready for delivery to various warehouses across eastern Chad that service the numerous sites where refugees and displaced people reside.

The part of Order # 81707503 that was to go to the old woman in Koloma arrived at a WFP warehouse just 185 km away, but there it stopped. It was June, the rainy season, when "wadis," or riverbeds, which are normally

see **CHAD** on page 15 ▶

Photo by David Hecht, IRIN

Railway line from Douala to Ngaoundéré.

CONTINUED. . .

AID from page 1

and unhindered as it needs to be," he said.

Despite Burma's refusal to at first admit foreign relief experts and supplies, the military rulers eventually allowed air deliveries of aid to the capital of Rangoon, which were then handed out by the Burmese military, and later by NGOs, to survivors of the May 3 cyclone. Nargis killed 77,000 and left 56,000 missing, according to the government of Burma – also called Myanmar.

Kunder said that if aid had been delivered despite Burmese government objections, a military conflict could have been sparked, taking more lives than would be saved by emergency relief.

Kunder, and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs James B. Warlick, told the panel that each country must take responsibility for protection and care of its own citizens.

"When a state is unable to assist its people and unwilling to accept foreign assistance, the international community, through the United Nations, can use diplomatic and other peaceful means to try to persuade the state to allow assistance in," said Warlick.

"The question – what is our last resort if all else fails – poses the greatest challenge in humanitarian efforts… Must the world stand by while people suffer and die…?"

The State Department official said that the U.N. Security Council can act under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter, which allows use of military force but only if the "situation presents a threat to international peace and security."

He noted that the World Summit Document of September 2005 says that the international community has a "responsibility to protect" or "R2P" only in four cases: war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing. These are largely seen as internal threats and, thus, international intervention is usually trumped by respect for national sovereignty. However, these internal actions can sometimes threaten international peace and security and trigger calls for intervention.

Kunder noted that USAID has delivered American aid in the past five years to Cuba, North Korea, Iran, Venezuela, Zimbabwe, and Burma despite having poor relations with them.

He said that U.S. aid, in situations where countries are reluctant to accept U.S. monitors or aid experts, can be delivered through neutral parties such as the United Nations and the Red Cross.

Kunder also presented other methods to overcome obstacles to aid delivery, including:

- International diplomatic pressure, especially in regional groups
- Removal of U.S. branding from relief supplies
- Airdrops such as in Bosnia
- Cross border relief such as in Sudan
- Negotiated safe corridors for access

The inability of the international community to deliver aid to Burma's cyclone survivors brought to mind the failure by the international community to intervene during a crisis to prevent genocide in Europe in World War II, in Cambodia in 1975-1978, and in Rwanda in 1994.

The intervention by U.S. forces in Somalia in 1991 to halt a famine showed the difficulty of such operations: without a central government able to provide security, U.S. forces became the target of chaotic militias and foreign aid fanned the fighting.

However, in Sudan, where an agreement was made to allow aid in through the south, "we saved millions of lives," said Kunder.

Sen. Robert Menendez (D-N.J.) asked "when does a certain number of lives reach the threshold—1,000 or 10,000" to trigger international intervention?

"It's like when we say 'never again' [after the Holocaust] and sit back and let people get slaughtered."

Kunder responded by noting that, after the initial rebuff by the Burmese generals, USAID used diplomatic pressure and neutral partners and, in the end, hundreds of thousands of Burmese received U.S. aid. ★

FOOD from page 1

Tijan Sallah, the head of the World Bank's Africa food task force, told the Bloomberg News Service. Rising fertilizer costs are challenging farmers in maintaining production, particularly in the arid regions of Africa, Sallah said.

High food costs also undermine education and health. "For the poorest one billion living on just a dollar per day, very high food prices can mean the stark choices between taking a sick child to the clinic, paying school fees, or putting food on the table," Fore said in May.

Relief agencies are reporting that in Djibouti, 45 percent of the population is affected by the food shortage. Half the country's livestock has died from lack of either food or water. USAID provided $500,000 to UNICEF for the therapeutic feeding of up to 25,000 acutely malnourished children.

The majority of USAID funding for the region is going to Ethiopia, where 10.4 million people need emergency aid. In Kenya, 1.2 million people require emergency food assistance, including 300,000 people affected by post-election violence and 900,000 people in arid and semi-arid areas, USAID officials said.

The failure of crops is expected to increase the need for food through September. Ethiopia's government has requested $325 million in aid. The United States is spending $324 million to combat drought as well as hunger in Ethiopia, according to agency officials. Funds are going for water, sanitation, hygiene, health, nutrition, and agriculture. According to the U.N. News Service, more than 75,000 Ethiopian children face acute malnutrition.

Most aid to Ethiopia arrives by ship in Djibouti and there appears to be a shortage of trucks to carry the food into Ethiopia's needy regions.

Neighboring Eritrea is also suffering from a drought, with over a third of the population affected by food shortages. USAID contributed $1.9 million to Eritrea. There is little accurate information about food needs and deliveries. U.S. assistance is funneled through Catholic Relief Services and UNICEF.

In Somalia, where 27 percent of the population is in dire need of food, civil unrest and the devaluation of the Somali shilling contributed to the crisis. Two prominent aid officials have recently been kidnapped and four aid workers killed, causing CARE to suspend its deliveries of U.S.-supplied food to 250,000 people in the central region.

There have been no hijackings of ships carrying food relief to Somalia since naval escorts started in November. The World Food Program asked for naval escorts to take over patrols from France, Holland, and Denmark, which have been rotating their naval protection forces.

In addition to funding, USAID sent a seven-member humanitarian assistance team to Ethiopia and disaster relief experts to Kenya.

More than 570,000 metric tons of food valued at $472 million was sent to Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya, and Somalia. ★

LEBANON from page 6

USAID's work and improve perceptions. After a competitive bidding process, USAID selected Memac Ogilvy & Mather, a branch of the international Ogilvy & Mather public relations firm, to manage the campaign.

The campaign needed to emphasize USAID's people-to-people message and long-standing commitment. However, the campaign also needed to balance those goals with images that showed the strength and talent of the Lebanese people.

During the course of the campaign, recognition of USAID more than doubled from 27 percent to 57 percent, according to nationwide pre- and post-campaign polling. The percentage of those with a favorable opinion increased from 44 percent to 53 percent. The Lebanese still strongly associate USAID with a political agenda. However, the perception of USAID as an organization that aims at improving the social environment in Lebanon (schools, water, etc.) has gained significant ground and is now among the statements most strongly associated with USAID. ★

YOUR VOICE from page 12

Sitting outside with me as the sprayers finished up their work, the patriarch of this household of 20 expressed his gratitude to PMI for the indoor residual spraying campaign. "We sleep well now, as there are fewer mosquitoes after the first round of spraying," he says, "and the number of malaria cases is much smaller, too."

Many residents of Mbagam told me how seriously they regard malaria, and note the extra precautions they take to avoid it. "We have a tradition of using bed nets, which is now reinforced by the spraying campaign. I have re-treated my bed net three times," said Mbathio Diop, a 56-year-old mother of nine. "We really appreciate the spraying campaign because we know it's going to help our community."

It was a truly good feeling to witness and be a small part of that assistance. Moussa Gueye and his family may not remember the slightly awkward Westerner blasting their wall with insecticide, but I certainly will not forget these warm, hospitable beneficiaries. I just may need to return one day to claim that sticky glass of sweet mint tea. ★

MADAGASCAR from page 7

Ocean area.

The new books delivered to Madagascar include text books on math, physics, natural science, chemistry, history, geography, business development, sociology, psychology, journalism, and English language training. They are for use from primary levels through university.

About 80,000 books have been distributed among all 22 administrative regions of Madagascar. They will go to libraries in 1,233 schools—reaching 400,000 students. In addition, six universities and three teaching resource centers managed by Peace Corps volunteers and the Ministry of Education were to receive some of the donated books.

The two foundations also provided 10 pieces of computer equipment, which were distributed to the regional offices of the Ministry of Education. ★

CONTINUED. . .

LEGISLATORS from page 1

President Kennedy and has not been substantially reauthorized since the mid-1980s. The bill needs to be changed to deal with global extremism and other modern problems, he said.

Sen. Chuck Hagel (R-Neb.) said foreign aid "ricochets from crisis to crisis without thinking where we want it to go."

Agreeing with Berman, he said "the military takes too much of the weight of foreign assistance."

Rep. Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.), chairman of the House of Representatives' appropriations subcommittee that oversees U.S. foreign aid funding, said that "our assistance programs are a means of alleviating poverty and suffering, advancing human rights, and promoting democratic governments.

"But it's also in the interests of the United States of America to pursue a vigorous aid and development program. Open, healthy, functional societies are consistent with and indeed essential to global security. They directly confront the conditions that give rise to radicalism."

Lowey opposed—for the present—a move to create a Cabinet level development department, saying it might fragment U.S. foreign policy and distract attention from needed foreign aid reforms.

The Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network includes Steve Radelet of the Center for Global Development, former USAID Administrator Brian Atwood, Gayle Smith of the Center for American Progress, Carol Lancaster of Georgetown University, Francis Fukuyama of Johns Hopkins University, and officials from organizations such as InterAction, Save the Children, Oxfam America, the Academy for Educational Development, Bread of the World, and the Council on Foreign Relations.

The skyrocketing price of food was mentioned by David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World, who said that "this thing is the biggest setback in the world's development efforts for 20 years." ★

PARAGUAY from page 7

Men, women, and children sift through 1,500 tons of waste deposited daily, of which two-thirds is organic and biodegradable and one-third is inorganic.

Shopping malls, hotels, and companies are now sorting their waste for recyclables and providing them directly to Procicla, a project that is improving living conditions for gancheros with the support of USAID, other foreign governments, the Paraguayan government, and private sector entities.

The Municipality of Asuncion contributed land where a sorting center for recyclable waste has been established. Private recycling companies offered technical assistance, uniforms, and other specialized equipment and materials.

A core team of gancheros has been trained in recycling methods that bring higher levels of safety and raised income from about $5.50 to $8.50 per day, while the average work day has decreased from 12 hours to eight.

Children can now go to school, and a local NGO has donated music instruments and classes. The community also created a cooperative with 150 ganchero members to provide loans, education, and solidarity.

By expanding into other arenas—such as providing cleaning services to companies, the gancheros are making a transition from an informal and individual recycling process to a business-oriented model. ★

BULGARIA from page 7

of policies to spur local business climate improvement, investment, and job creation.

"The start was difficult," said Zlatko Zhivkov, mayor of the Bulgarian city Montana, of the reform measures. "Following our participation in several trade shows and as a result of an aggressive marketing policy, we began to receive the first inquiries from leads. The efforts started to produce results. Since 2004, thanks to the efforts of the Montana Economic Development team, we have managed to recruit more than 4 million Bulgarian leva ($3.2 million) in investments."

To date, more than 2,500 new jobs have been created. Businesses and investors poured $190 million into new investment and $32 million into expansion of existing businesses. Thirty-three cities have been certified as "ready for business." Half of Bulgaria's 59 certified economic development professionals participated in U.S.-based internships.

Philip Dunlap, economic development director for Auburn, Ala., recalls, "Auburn was given the job of developing and delivering a training program to the local economic development experts selected in the partnership cities. We believe that this is where we have made our single greatest contribution to the program."

Over the last four years, the Alabama civil servants developed an 80-hour training program for their counterparts in 39 cities to help them understand methods of recruiting businesses to their municipalities and then retaining them after the companies set up shop. ★

CHAD from page 13

dry, suddenly fill with water and make almost all roads in the area impassable.

WFP normally pre-positions food in villages and refugee camps to ensure that people have enough to eat during times when new food aid can't get through. But Order # 81707503 did not make it in time.

Prepping

It was a full six months later that the order arrived by truck at a warehouse in Goz Beida less than 4 km from Koloma—a full 15 months since Order # 81707503 was signed in Washington D.C.

Two days before the delivery arrived at Koloma, aid officials called a meeting with 25 chiefs from the various displaced sites nearby.

They explained to the chiefs exactly when the deliveries would arrive at each site and what quantities would be apportioned. The point the officials wanted to drive home was that food aid would only go to displaced people who were registered.

During previous food distributions, people who had not registered were angry that they did not receive food.

"Many were not really displaced," said an agency official who did not want to be named. "Vacant homes [in sites for displaced] would suddenly be occupied just before the distribution was to take place."

Those people had threatened to attack aid workers during the next food distribution and now aid officials wanted the chiefs to give their assurances that this would not happen.

Distribution Day

As the truck arrived at Koloma at 8.30 a.m., hundreds of people were lining up calmly with registration cards in hand.

They waited over an hour as men unloaded the contents of the truck, including the oil from Order # 81707503.

As the distribution began, the old woman, Hawa Brahim, also fell in line. Her turn came, but she looked at her rations then looked at the aid workers.

"This is really not enough," she said.

This article was written by IRIN (Integrated Regional Information Networks), the humanitarian news and analysis service of the United Nation's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. It is also available at www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=78323. ★

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Submit notices, story ideas, feedback to FrontLines articles and requests to be added to the mailing list to FrontLines@usaid.gov.

USAID Helps Thai Cops Stop Illegal Animal Trade

Photo by Nev Broadis, Wildlife Alliance

This slow loris, rescued from wildlife traders, now lives in a wildlife sanctuary in Cambodia.

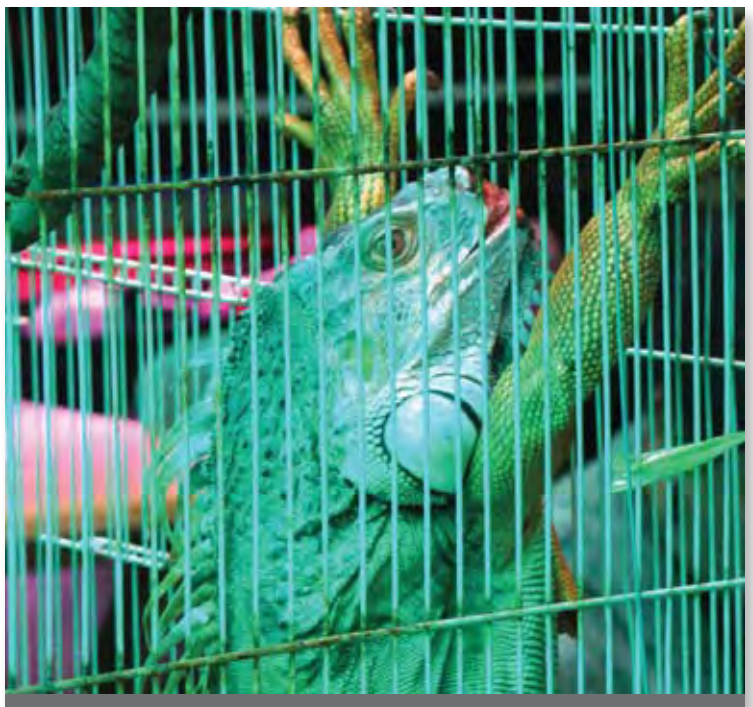


Photo by Nick Sorenson, Wildlife Alliance

It was unknown whether this bearded dragon from Bangkok's Chatuchak Market is a legal specimen or poached from the wild.

Pangolins are widely smuggled in Southeast Asia, both for food and medicinal uses. This photo was taken at Thailand's Khao Yai National Park, where one of ASEAN-WEN's training centers is located.

WASHINGTON— In Bangkok's vast, crowded Chatuchak Market, the usual crew of people showed up recently to sell endangered animals such as gibbons, star turtles, Madagascar tortoises, horn-billed birds, and slow lorises. But this time, a team of special police descended on them, arresting many and ending the illegal sales.

Police Maj. Gen. Surasit Sangkhaphong, who was recently appointed by the Royal Thai Government to head a special environmental protection unit, told *FrontLines* on a visit to Washington that he is "collecting" people arrested for selling endangered animals by different agencies in Thailand. As a result of his actions and other Thai policies, the country is leading a regional effort to protect disappearing animals.

USAID has provided $3.6 million since 2006 to help ASEAN-WEN—the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Wildlife Enforcement Network—stop trafficking in endangered species. The Thai effort is the first significant breakthrough in enforcement.

"We have to act to protect the wildlife species," said Surasit.

Many of the animals are caught in Thailand, but others come from Indonesia and Malaysia and are shipped through Thailand. Rare animals and animal parts are purchased by some domestic customers, but most go to China where they are used as exotic food and are believed to enhance sexual performance.

The major general showed a video of confiscated animals including tigers and other large wild cats, both dead and alive, in cages. The video showed bear paws, snake skins, and other animal parts seized by police.

"To fight this crime we get support from USAID—without your support we would not be where we are today," Surasit said, speaking in Thai through an interpreter.

In Washington, the Thai police major general met with World Bank President Robert Zoellick at the National Zoo where they discussed a new tiger conservation initiative

ASEAN-WEN is the world's largest wildlife law enforcement network. In addition to Thailand, it includes Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma, Philippines, Singapore, and Vietnam. The network has links to Interpol and other world bodies. It works internally by carrying out investigations; making arrests; and alerting border officers, judges, and prosecutors about the laws regarding protection of wildlife.

In 2006, the ASEAN-WEN Support Program determined that more than 50 orangutans in a private zoo in Thailand belonged to Indonesia, and had been imported illegally. The program helped with a bilateral agreement between Indonesia and Thailand to repatriate the gorillas with U.S. financial and technical support.

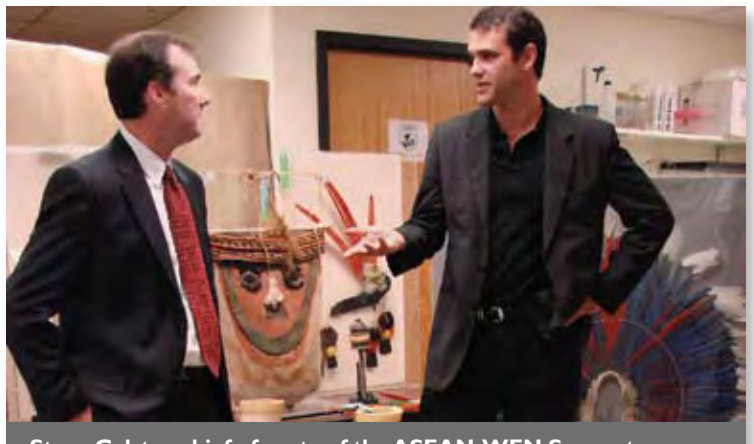
The USAID grant is helping to train 100 to 200 police and supply them with equipment. Technical assistance has also been provided from the U.S. Department of Justice, Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency, National Park Service, and Forestry Service.

In the past, Thai police have focused on drugs and other criminal activities, so shifting to protection of wildlife is requiring new skills.

"Wildlife crime remains a low priority" in the region, said the major general as he displayed photos of rare turtles. Collectively weighing a ton, the turtles were caught en route to China for use as food and medicine.

Michael Zwirn of the Wildlife Alliance, which is carrying out USAID's support for the ASEAN-WEN program, said U.S. funds train customs and wildlife agencies in most of the 10 ASEAN countries to detect and interdict wildlife shipments; and to recognize wildlife that is protected under CITES – the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora.

In addition to helping countries thwart smuggling and protect endangered species, USAID funding builds public awareness about the illegal wildlife trade through its Sold Out campaign. Materials are produced in Thai and English that encourage the public to refuse to purchase illegal plants and animals and to report any illegal sales they witness. ★



Steve Galster, chief of party of the ASEAN-WEN Support Program, left, with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Special Agent Ed Grace, amidst confiscated items of illegal wildlife trade. USAID has provided more than $3 million to ASEAN-WEN.