



OCIO CHRONICLES

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OCIO GOALS FOR USAID

- Information on Demand
- Innovation and Process Efficiency
- Effective and Efficient IT Service
- Enhanced Workforce Management

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ADS 548 IV&V Review Supports Wise Technology Investments

USAID/Kenya is a partner in a public-private partnership called *Accelerating 21st Century Skills in Education (ACE)*, a program that supports integration of information and communication technology (ICT) in education in Kenya. Working with its other partners—including Intel, Cisco, Microsoft and Smart Technologies—USAID/Kenya is improving the quality of education in Kenya through the effective use of modern tools in schools and teacher training colleges. An important tool is one-on-one e-learning, a model in which every student during a particular lesson has access to a computer.

In March, USAID/Kenya requested approval for its proposal to purchase and install IT equipment into 23 schools and three teacher training colleges in Kenya. The equipment included an array of hardware such as laptops, storage devices, scanners, surge protectors, and digital video and still cameras, as well as some software. The total value of the proposal was approximately \$992,000.

Under Agency’s ADS 548, all IT investments exceeding \$100,000 must be reviewed by M/CIO. USAID/Kenya complied with this requirement and sent its request to M/CIO/BCCS for review and approval.

In reviewing the ACE project, the ADS 548 IV&V Review Team noted two items that needed to be addressed. First, USAID/Kenya had selected laptops with 1 GB of RAM. The ADS 548 IV&V Review Team suggested a minimum of 2 GB RAM, both to increase the useful life of the machines and delay any necessary upgrades should software needs change in the future. Second, USAID/Kenya had selected a video camera that ADS 548 IV&V Review Team learned had been discontinued. This meant that the cameras might not be available when ACE needed them.

Responding to the ADS 548 IV&V Review Team feedback, USAID/Kenya revised its proposal request. It increased the memory from 1 GB to 2 GB on all computers requested. The Mission also re-drafted the request for digital video cameras, and made the specifications more generic to allow for alternatives. The ADS 548 IV&V Review Team also recommended that all future selections of video devices consider ongoing availability.

The total costs for the project proposal were not altered by these revisions. But the students and teachers who use the equipment will benefit greatly from working with computers with sufficient memory to perform the range of tasks they are likely to perform for the next few years. The project will also benefit from the choice to purchase digital video cameras that are still being manufactured, and for which replacements and/or parts will still be available for some time.

This story reinforces the fact that ADS 548 IV&V reviews are a great investment, even when the “purchase prices” of goods or services are not impacted by the outcome of the reviews. In this case, the value of the review will be seen in a few years when students and teachers will still have laptops and digital cameras that continue to meet their growing needs. In addition, USAID/Kenya will not need to request new equipment or major upgrades to these IT teaching and learning tools, freeing its funding to be used for other support services to ACE project and educational initiatives in Kenya.



More than 400,000 Kenyan children study in schools supported by the U.S. Government. (Photo: USAID/Kenya-Manoocher)

New and Improved Greenbook Website

The publication *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants* (the “Greenbook”) is a stalwart in the foreign assistance arena. It—and its companion website—are produced by USAID’s Economic Analysis and Data Services (M/CIO/KM). KM launched a redesigned website in April 2011 that now includes three viewing options:

- *Fast Facts*, which provides an overview of FY2009 US foreign assistance.
- *By Country*, which offers detailed economic assistance data (obligations and disbursement) by recipient country for 2001–2009.
- *Detailed Data*, which provides US economic and military assistance obligations by country for 1946–2009.

In addition, the redesigned site makes new data available to the public. For the first time, disbursement data are presented, as well as data detailing economic assistance by recipient country, funding agency, implementing agency, sector of assistance, and implementing partner type.

USAID has published the *Greenbook* for nearly 50 years, and launched the companion website a decade ago. It is considered the official record of US Government foreign assistance, and Congressional committees and the media rely upon it for data about foreign aid. Although the *Greenbook* pre-dates the Obama Administration’s Open Government Directive, it directly supports that policy by providing easy public access to detailed information on US foreign assistance.

The *Greenbook* print publication details US economic and military foreign-assistance obligations from 1946 to the present in historical dollars. Data are organized by country and are broken down by major funding agencies and accounts. The data are also presented by the various legislative authorities that have directed US foreign assistance: Post-War Relief (1946–1948), Marshall Plan (1949–1952), Mutual Security Act (1953–1961), and Foreign Assistance Act (1962–present). The companion website expands on this data by presenting data in constant dollars, which allows users to compare assistance levels in different time periods.

Finding answers to foreign-assistance questions has never been easier! Give the new *Greenbook* website a try at <http://gbk.eads.usaidallnet.gov/>.

Sustainability Issues at 2PY: New Office Technologies Help Reduce USAID's Carbon Footprint



Xerox Colorcube 9200 Series meets EPA's ENERGY STAR criteria for energy savings

When the decision was made to move to 2 Potomac Yard (2PY), USAID CIO Jerry Horton decided that OCIO would be as "green" as possible. One decision he made toward this goal was to switch office document equipment to multifunctional devices (MFDs). These devices perform multiple functions and are ENERGY STAR rated. According to US EPA, office equipment that has earned the ENERGY STAR rating helps eliminate wasted energy through special energy-efficient designs. They use less energy to perform regular tasks, and when not in use, automatically enter a low-power mode. By using less energy, these machines help us to reduce our carbon footprint for many of our document management and production activities.

OCIO has recently started using the Xerox Colorcube Model 9202.

This single piece of equipment replaces multiple office machines including faxes, copiers, scanners and printers. Because of the multifunctionality of these devices, the CIO also decided to eliminate personal printers. Mr. Horton does not have a personal printer and uses an MFD for his printing, scanning, fax, and copier needs. In addition, he decided to eliminate network printers and replace them with MFDs.

Adopting new energy-efficient office machines has resulted in many environmental and cost benefits, including:

- Much lower overall cost per page for printing/faxing/copying
- Environmentally friendly: Use less energy to perform document tasks
- Fewer devices means we use less electricity and floor space
- Fewer devices means we need to generate fewer contracts and purchase orders
- Scanning options on the MFD can reduce output of "hard copy" pages and increase use of e-mail in lieu of courier services/mail/overnight delivery services; these options save money
- Fewer printer supplies to stock, freeing up funds for other purposes and eliminating the need to throw away equipment (e.g., toners) when printers are replaced
- Improved features such as multi-set output with stapling for prints and faxes; more storage for queued-up fax and print jobs; faster print and fax devices
- Implementation of a fax server could reduce monthly telephone line charges



MFDs allow USAID to reduce its energy use -- and therefore its carbon footprint -- while offering excellent document management capabilities

If you want more information on MFDs at 2PY, please contact Stephanie Teasley, M/HM/HMD, for information on the Agency's Xerox contract. Please contact Tajuana Edwards, M/CIO/O&M, for information on scheduling and installation of the MFDs.

OCIO Welcomes Foreign Service Nationals and Interns to Washington

OCIO welcomes our newest Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs) and interns. They have come to us from far and wide, and will be supporting the Google Apps project during their stay with us. Please join us in welcoming them to OCIO!

Back row, left to right: Ian Warren, Stefan Saleo, Abdel-Halim Juneidi, Saul Arevalo

Front row, left to right: Anna-Maria Lukeera Muzaaya, Socorro Borges, Dijana Spaseva,



SAUL AREVALO

I'm Saul Arevalo. I was born and raised in Los Angeles, California. However, my heritage is originally from the country of El Salvador. I have spent the past seven years in the Armed Forces, which has given me an opportunity to earn a better education and a better future for myself. I was recently released from active duty. My personal motivation for this internship – and everything else in life -- comes from striving for the best I can be. I believe there is no perfect person, but there are Individuals that can be a great asset to a corporation or agency. My goal is to obtain as much knowledge as I can from my experience with USAID, while assisting those that are in need of technical support. I have always enjoyed technology. I am not only referring to computers, but also the technological aspects that have become a necessity in our society. As far as the skills I have to offer, I will apply technical skills, discipline skills, and leadership skills that I acquired during the time I served in the military in order to have an enjoyable relationship with my future employers. I hope I'm able to learn as much as possible from this internship experience so I can apply it to my future career.

ABDEL-HALIM JUNEIDI

Abdel-Halim Juneidi is a Computer Management Specialist in USAID/Jordan. Married with three children – two boys and one girl – he earned a Bachelor's degree in Electronic and Computer Engineering. Abdel-Halim joined USAID/Jordan in 1995 as computer maintenance engineer, moved to a Computer Management Assistant position in 2001, and has been in his current position since 2007. He does almost everything IT-related in USAID/Jordan! He loves watching and playing soccer.

STEFAN SALAO

I'm a citizen from Niger Republic. Before joining USAID/Niger in 1992 as the System Manager, I had worked for the Government of Niger as a Systems Analyst since 1981. I had the privilege to work for USAID in two countries, namely REDSO/Abidan (1995 to 1998) and then in USAID/Benin from 1998 to today. I earned my Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science in 1981 and my MCSA in 2001. I have had the privilege to come for professional training in the USA since 1984. I have obtained various certificates in IT-related fields from the Research Triangle Institute (North Carolina), Stanford University, and E-learning Tree International. I have attended all Systems Managers conferences and training sessions since 1992. My professional objective is to work in a structure where my competences are needed in an information technology/management environment. My role is to manage, maintain, and troubleshoot IT software and hardware systems, train users, and procure IT-related equipment or software systems.

ANNA MARIA LUKEERA MUZAAYA

I am the Systems Manager for the USAID Mission in Uganda. I have been working in the IT world for the last 15 years. I did my first degree in Electrical Engineering and started my career with an IT service provider company where we deployed a lot of systems to various organizations. It was my experience there that led me to specialize deeper into IT. So I did an MSc. Information Technology at Loughborough University in the UK. Then I worked in the banking industry and after 2 years I joined the International Organization world starting with the UN World Food Program, then USAID. I have been married for the last twelve years and have three children. I love my job greatly with all its challenges and I enjoy looking after my family.

DIJANA SPASEVA

I work as a Systems Manager in USAID/Macedonia. I have a B.A. in Computer Science and Automation from the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science in Skopje, Macedonia.

Beginning with USAID/Macedonia from its start in 1995, I have witnessed a lot of changes in IT systems. My main role as a systems manager is to keep the IT systems in the Mission available, reliable, and secure, and to apply IT technology to improve the Mission work performance to the maximum. I plan, manage and direct the information systems and computing resources for the entire Mission, introducing new technologies and solutions to help users to do their job effectively.

In 2001 accepted the role of a Project Team Leader for the development of the "EXO Applications" computer system, which revolutionized the way administrative services were provided at USAID/Macedonia. The project was based on developing web-based automated application as a mechanism to track administrative actions, allow employees to make requests from the Executive Office, and serve as a library of informative documents/website links. After the initial phase, more than 10 other Missions installed the system. I was directly involved providing on site and/or remote support to system managers.

I also participate in development work by program offices. In 2009 I assumed the responsibility of activity manager of the ICT component of a project in the USAID/Macedonia education office. That gave me an opportunity to familiarize myself with and participate in the development work, which is a valuable experience. My responsibility was to provide IT expert advice and participate in project implementation activities. I was representing USAID in regular working meetings with government officials.

When I'm not working, I like to read and spend time with my 13-year-old son. I also enjoy outdoors activities like hiking, walking and biking.

SOCORRO BORGES

I started working for USAID in 1993 as the assistant/translator to the Mission Director. One year later, I went to Frankfurt for a Banyan Vines administration course, and since then have been in charge of USAID/Brazil's Technology systems.

Before coming to USAID, I worked for several international organizations, including the British and Nigerian embassies, the United Nations (FNUAP and WPF), and a multinational mining company (RTZ Mining).

I have a bachelor's degree in Portuguese and English language and literature and two MBAs, one in Computer Networks and the other in Information Systems Management.

I was born in Brasilia, the capital of Brazil, and have always lived there. I am the happy mother of two beautiful kids, Cibelle, a 14-year-old girl and Davi, an 18-year-old young man.

During my free time, I love being with my kids and the rest of my family, watching movies, going to the theater, reading, hanging out with friends, and travelling both inside and outside Brazil. I have been to the U.S. several times, to Europe, Central America, and also some countries in South America. My favorite hobby is ballroom dancing. Dancing transports me to a place outside of my body and makes me forget all my problems and difficulties. It's my therapy.

IAN FARRAR WARREN

Ian Farrar Warren is a native of Fort Washington, MD. He attended Grace Brethren Christian School from 2006-2009, where he was a member of the Marching Band and the JV and varsity basketball teams. He completed his senior year at Friendly High School, where he was on the honor roll and a proud member of the Friendly High School Marching Patriots. Ian is currently pursuing a degree in Computer Science at Bowie State University.

Ian is a member of Ebenezer African Methodist Episcopal Church in Fort Washington, MD where he is an active member of the College Family Ministry (CFAM). He was an active member of the Sunday School Ministry and the Ebenezer Drawing Ministry where he became an illustrator of his first children's book entitled "Elijah". Ian enjoys working out, producing music, playing basketball and fixing computers. Ian's passion and love for computers opened doors for him to become an entrepreneur in the computer field. Throughout high school and college, he worked part-time fixing computers and installing programs for friends and neighbors.

Ian joined Boy Scouts of America at an early age and held several positions throughout his scouting career including assistant patrol leader, patrol leader, troop guide and senior patrol leader. Ian received his Eagle Scout Award in May, 2010. For his Eagle Scout project, he hosted several Crime Prevention Workshops throughout his community. He has developed and presented several crime prevention awareness seminars covering identity theft, auto theft, and home invasions for his neighborhood, church and civic organizations in the Washington metropolitan area.

Upon completion of college, Ian aspires to become a computer scientist and an audio engineer, allowing his passion for computers and music to be fulfilled. Ian continues his involvement in community service and his commitment in leadership and assistance to younger scouts in Troop 487 as the young adult Scout Master.

The 2011 Summer Seminar Season is Upon Us!

Mark your calendar! The USAID Summer Seminar Series returns this July and August for its eighth season. This year's offerings promise a summer that will sizzle with stimulating conversation about hot international development topics.

Seminars will be held at the National Press Club on Wednesdays from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. throughout July and on August 3. This year's preliminary lineup:

- • July 6: *Global Trends in Science and Technology. What's Ahead?*
- • July 13: *A Greener Revolution: Improving Productivity and Increasing Food Security While Enhancing Ecosystem Services*
- • July 20: *Working in Complex Environments*
- • July 27: *Business and Human Rights: Emerging Issue on the Development Horizon*
- • August 3: *Geographic Information Systems (GIS): The Next Development Breakthrough*



Popular within USAID, the seminars are also well-attended by members of the development, government, and academic communities. In 2010, approximately 500 people participated in seminars that featured discussions on mobile technology, international disaster assistance, and anti-trafficking efforts. The 2009 series included panels on civilian-military cooperation and microfinance. Panelists have included agency staff and guests from the Obama Administration, the Gates Foundation, Microsoft, the Department of Defense, the World Bank, the Embassies of Tanzania and the Philippines, and Wheaton College.

The summer seminar series allows us to set aside a few hours for several weeks each summer to join partners and colleagues in examining timely development topics, in considering the insights of experts, and in asking challenging questions. We hope you'll join us!

The National Press Club is located at 529 14th Street NW, Washington, DC. Take the elevators that are to the right upon entering the building. Go to the 13th floor. Signs and staff will direct you to the seminar meeting room.

For more information about the 2011 Summer Seminar Series, contact the USAID Knowledge Services Center at ksc@usaid.gov or 202-712-0579. For details on previous seminars, go to the USAID Seminar Series on Developedia.

Research Services Supports Evidence- Based Development and Organizational Learning

Where do questions such as, "How do we create effective entrepreneurial opportunities for women in the E&E region?", "Which strategies for demobilizing combatants in Afghanistan have been most successful?", or "What is the relationship between land tenure and economic growth in Sudan?" converge on a daily basis? In USAID's Research Services, of course!

Research Services, located within the Knowledge Management division, works with USAID staff across all sectors and divisions, providing analyses of best practices, briefing papers on emerging issues in international development, and compilations of quantitative data and historical research.

Marshaling the Agency's vast experience and knowledge, Research Services' analysts collaborate with clients to create research products that inform policymaking, guide program design, and support strategic planning. Mike Ardivino, a senior research analyst specializing in Democracy and Governance (D&G), enjoys what he calls "providing a theoretical and conceptual basis for program design" and applying solid evidence that supports D&G's policy, programming, and training work. Recently, Mike provided research and analysis focusing on rapidly unfolding events in the Middle East, enabling D&G staff to respond swiftly to the changing political and social environment in that region. If you are looking to prepare for your next project, learn from best practices, or connect to development resources, contact Research Services at ksc@usaid.gov or visit our Developedia site at <http://developedia.usaid.gov/> (keyword: KSC).



Re-baselining a Project



Once the Project Review Board within M/CIO approves an IT project's scope, cost, and schedule estimates, the estimates are considered "locked in" from further changes. These approved estimates are then known as the project's baseline. When a project's cost and schedule performance exceed variance thresholds (greater or less than 10%), project managers (PMs) may choose to modify the baseline to reflect current conditions or to address factors that are causing the variances. *Rebaselining* is the general term used to describe a major realignment of the baseline.

Rebaselining improves the correlation between a project's work plan and its baseline budget, scope, and schedule. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has outlined acceptable reasons for rebaselining a project. The reasons include a significant change in investment goals resulting from internal or external management decisions; changes in funding level or availability; contractual changes; progressive elaboration for investments that are being developed in phases; and when variances have become so high that the original baseline has lost meaning. However, OMB warns that a rebaseline should not be requested when a project is suffering general cost and schedule slippages, or to hide variances.

If a project meets at least one of the acceptable reasons to rebaseline, the PM must complete a Baseline Change Request (BCR) Form. Using this form, the PM describes any changes to performance goals and metrics; summarizes the changes in the project's scope, schedule, and cost; identifies the contributing problems for the variance; outlines comprehensive remediation plans to prevent recurrence; and describes any actions that must be taken to ensure the baseline accurately reflects contracting constraints and risks. A rebaselining action may require an Integrated Baseline Review (IBR) to ensure the new cost and schedule will meet all contractual requirements and budgetary objectives.

Rebaselining is a management tool that helps us to keep projects on track. However, it is not a substitute for thorough project management. PMs must still pay careful attention to progress on their projects to ensure that USAID's investments in IT projects yield positive returns and support the Agency's mission efficiently and cost-effectively.

OCIO Blog!

OCIO continues its conversation about our strategies, plans, policies and guidance in the "bits and bites" blog. Is there something you don't understand, or a topic you want to know more about? Drop us a line and we'll respond on "bits and bites".

You can reach us at:

<http://blogs.usaid.gov/bitsandbites/2011/03/22/welcome-to-bits-and-bites/>.

We look forward to "seeing" you there!



Leveraging Integrated Baseline Review (IBR) Planning Artifacts in TechStat Sessions



In 2009, OMB launched the Federal IT Dashboard to provide visibility and transparency to the performance of IT investments across the Federal Government. After several years of sharing this information with the public, Congress and OMB recognized the need to do more than ‘shine a light’ on IT investments: they needed to take action and establish accountability. As a result, In January 2010, OMB required Federal agencies to undertake what are called “TechStat sessions,” and provided guidance and mandates to all Federal Agencies on this process. TechStat sessions are evidence-based reviews of ‘underperforming’ IT investments, based on cost and schedule performance information reported to the Federal IT Dashboard.

The purposes of TechStat sessions are to provide (1) an unbiased, data-driven review of the health and status of investments in order to ensure the highest probability of investment success, 2) a means for identifying root causes of problems supported by concrete corrective actions, and 3) investment teams with objective feedback to help turn around performance. With the growing constraint on Agency IT budgets, it is critically important that IT investments are aligned to Agency priorities, functioning efficiently, and meeting performance goals.

Although earned value management is not the main focus of TechStat Sessions, many of the key documents reviewed during TechStat sessions are the same ones that are reviewed during an integrated baseline review (IBR). If an IBR goes well, it results in approval of the cost and schedule performance baseline. This baseline is then used as the basis for earned value reporting throughout the project lifecycle. The documents that are used for both purposes include project scope statements, project charters, performance measures, integrated master schedules, risk management plans, and detailed time-phased cost estimates.

By knowing the requirements of and expectations for TechStat sessions, project teams will be better equipped to respond to detailed questions about a project’s status. The information gathered during a TechStat session can be used to define actions that a project team can take to increase the likelihood of project success, or if necessary, to cancel a project that has gone seriously off-track and cannot be salvaged.



Courtesy of www.cio.gov