

USAID/Burma
ANNUAL REPORT FY 2003

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Please Note:

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A. Program Level Narrative

Program Performance Summary:

Since 1962, Burma has been ruled by a military junta, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), that has brutally suppressed any form of dissent and has presided over a significant deterioration of the , and under whose leadership the country's economic and social performance has significantly deteriorated. Since the late 1980s, the regime has carried out aggressive military campaigns against ethnic populations, primarily located along the Thai-Burma border. These campaigns, along with the severe suppression of dissent and the deteriorating economic and humanitarian situation within inside Burma, have led to a growing population of economic and political refugees, both within inside Burma and in surrounding countries. Of the population that fled Burma, approximately 175,000 live in refugee camps in Thailand and Bangladesh. Another estimated 1.5 to 2,000,000 Burmese live in countries surrounding Burma (approximately 1,500,000 live in Thailand), but outside formal refugee camps. An additional estimated 1,000,000 civilians have been displaced inside Burma and are either in forced relocation camps or in hiding in the jungles.

The United States is challenged with challenge facing the U.S. is how to effectively support and influence an eventual peaceful transition to a democratically elected government in Burma, while helping provide critical assistance to the growing number of refugees and displaced people living inside Burma and along Burma's borders. In addition there is a rapidly accelerating humanitarian crisis across the Burmese population in terms of health and education. HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases are rampant and uncontrolled while the education infrastructure has collapsed. While supporting data are very limited the economic situation is clearly spiraling downward with the currency devalued to record lows in real terms and inflation skyrocketing. The dilemma is how to mitigate this humanitarian disaster while not showing or providing support for the SPDC.

U.S. Government policy towards Burma seeks to encourage progress toward democracy, an improved human rights climate, and more effective counter-narcotics efforts.

USAID Program: Assistance is focused on three interrelated objectives: Develop the capacity of the Burmese people to manage the eventual transition to a democratic society in a participatory, transparent, and accountable manner; maintain and/or increase pressure on the SPDC to improve its human rights record; and maintain and/or increase pressure on the SPDC to engage in meaningful dialogue with the democratic opposition and ethnic minorities leading towards a peaceful transition to a democratically elected government.

Beginning in fiscal year FY 1996, Congress earmarked funds for humanitarian and democracy programs related to the crisis in Burma and along Burma's border with Thailand. In FYs 1996 and 1997, the funds were primarily for activities designed to strengthen and support nascent democratic efforts inside and outside Burma. Those funds were managed by the Department of State's Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. In FY 1998, \$5 million was appropriated for Burma, of which \$1.5 million was allocated to support humanitarian assistance to refugees located along the Thai-Burma border. In 1998, Congress increased the funds appropriated for Burma to \$5.0 million and specified that \$1.5 million be programmed for humanitarian assistance to refugees located along the Thai-Burma border. Those funds complemented activities already being funded under the Department of State's Population, Refugees and Migration program. USAID contributed \$1.5 million in Development Assistance funds to those efforts and began that year to manage the humanitarian activities under the earmark. In FYs 1999, 2000, and 2001, the earmark was increased to \$6.5 million, and comprised \$3 million in Development Assistance for humanitarian activities and \$3.5 million in Economic Support Funds for democracy activities. USAID has continued to manage the humanitarian component and is taking a greater role in managing the democracy component of the earmark.

Other Program Elements: In addition to the Burma earmark funded activities USAID supports several NGO-based HIV/AIDS programs inside Burma. Please refer to Strategic Objective 498-022, Regional

HIV/AIDS and Infectious Diseases under ANE Regional Programs. In addition, the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration provides food, commodities, and other humanitarian assistance to refugees in the camps in Thailand and Bangladesh.

Other Donors: The activities being funded under the program operate independently of the Burmese regime, but are coordinated with major donors supporting democracy and humanitarian assistance in Burma. Bilateral donor programs that focus on humanitarian assistance in Burma include Australia, the United Kingdom, the EU and many of its countries, and most Nordic countries. Multilateral donors with activities in Burma include the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Program, the International Organization for Migration, the World Food Program, and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. Humanitarian assistance along the Burma-Thailand border is provided by over 30 other donor agencies through either the Burma Donors Forum or the Coordinating Council for Support to Displaced Persons in Thailand. Bilateral donors include the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Australia, and the United Kingdom. Multilateral donors include the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Program, the World Food Program, and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

Environmental Compliance:

Country Closeout & Graduation:

D. Results Framework

482-002 Democracy and Humanitarian Assistance

Discussion: