

# **USAID/Office of Transition Initiatives**

## **Annual Report**

**FY 2004**

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## **Please Note:**

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## Office of Transition Initiatives

### Performance:

In FY2003, the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) initiated programs in Angola, Iraq, Sri Lanka, and Sudan, continued programs in Afghanistan, Burundi, DRC, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe, and closed programs in Macedonia and Peru. The OTI program in Angola is in the early stages and performance data are not yet available. Because of the extremely difficult situation in Zimbabwe, meaningful performance data could not be collected this year. Performance results in this report include: Afghanistan, Burundi, DRC, Iraq, Macedonia, Peru, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Venezuela.

In addition, OTI continued to fulfill the Administrator's request for engagement on conflict commodities, especially timber. In June, OTI and the Asia/Near East Bureau released a joint diagnostic of the nature and scope of conflict timber in Asia and Africa. The report produced some unexpected findings including the conclusion that conflict resulting from competition over forest resources between rival groups is more serious and more widespread than instances where timber is sold to finance civil conflict. The results of the diagnostic have been widely shared and warmly received as an important contribution to understanding of this complex topic. USAID's Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation plans to use the diagnostic as the basis for one of the "tool-kits" they are developing to assist field staff with conflict-sensitive programming and the OECD/DAC's Conflict Network will be incorporating timber into the guidance they are developing on conflict over natural resources. Also during the year OTI issued a grant to Global Witness to develop a comprehensive database on trade in such conflict commodities as diamonds, oil, timber, gold and other minerals. Utilizing sophisticated search software, Global Witness expects to draw from the data a deeper understanding of the interconnections between the people and organizations trading in conflict commodities.

Established in FY 2003 and housed within OTI, USAID's abuse prevention and protection unit (APPU) has lead responsibility for protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of civilians in complex emergencies and situations of armed conflict. Currently in the start-up phase, the APPU will offer flexible and immediate assistance to address urgent issues, including: politically or ethnically-motivated violence (e.g. reprisal killings, assaults or rapes, forced disappearances); tensions caused by former-regime crimes such as massive forced displacement; and the needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs), women, children, minorities, and other vulnerable groups. The APPU coordinates closely with USAID missions and other offices that work on related areas such as humanitarian relief, conflict mitigation, democracy and governance, protection of IDPs, and women. APPU also promotes close collaboration within the larger U.S. Government and with relevant non-governmental and international organizations.

### OTI/Afghanistan

USAID/OTI's goal is to support the process of recovery, rehabilitation, and political development in post-conflict Afghanistan. Working with local and international partners, OTI is bolstering citizen confidence in the process of political development, empowering citizens to address basic community needs, promoting alliances between government and citizens, and strengthening independent media. OTI programs are developed in an effort to show immediate peace dividends and build confidence among the Afghan people and government until larger, longer-term USAID programs come on line. The overall strategy is to assist the Afghan government in functioning outside Kabul by planning and implementing projects guided by community priorities and creating and/or strengthening linkages among the national, provincial, and district governments. In FY 2003, OTI obligated almost \$15.2 million for its Afghanistan program and cleared 273 sub-grants totaling nearly \$13.2 million.

OTI media development activities in FY 2003 generated significant results and impacts. In one activity, OTI contributed \$290,000 for equipment and training for a communication system that links Kabul to all

32 provinces and the provinces to each other for the first time in the country's history. The equipment - high-frequency Codan radios - can operate as a telephone, as well as send e-mail and scanned documents. Also provided were computers, scanners, and printers. During the first three weeks of operation, nearly 1,000 messages were processed by the Ministry of Communication and over the first five months some 6,000 documents were exchanged between Kabul and the provinces. An early instance of impact occurred in exchanges between Kabul and Faryab, a remote province in the northwest with recurring factional fighting. The Codans made it possible for President Karzai to receive information on an outbreak as soon as it happened, consult with his advisors, and quickly send instructions to help resolve the conflict.

Development of independent (non-state) provincial and community radio stations has also been an important target, since radio is regarded as the medium with the greatest potential to reach large numbers of people throughout the country. To fulfill this potential, OTI has funded a \$1.5 million, 12-month grant, which in just eight months has resulted in six new, independent stations being on the air across the country, including Radio Killid FM in Kabul. Another grant of \$229,000 supported the establishment of Afghanistan's first private FM station, Arman FM. Radio Arman and Radio Killid have been strikingly successful from the start. According to one survey, more than 80 percent of the Kabul listening audience had tuned in to these new stations within months of their launching. Radio Arman's format is targeted toward young listeners and consists primarily of music, interspersed with banter between a male and female DJ and short segments on topics of interest to young people. Radio Killid likewise plays music, but also has built up talk programming (four hours a day in its first two months of operations) on public issues and personal items of interest.

Small OTI infrastructure grants have helped communities across Afghanistan address basic needs and promote alliances between government and citizens. For example, in the Fatmasti Valley of Bamyan province an eroded, badly leaking 2,500 meter irrigation canal has been rebuilt with stone masonry. The project, which cost \$33,405, helped convince hundreds of families that had fled the area after years of war and drought to return and others who would have left if there was not enough water to irrigate the land to stay. It has benefited the 3,600 members of the local community by substantially increasing the amount of land under cultivation and providing temporary work for more than 350 people.

Similarly, a \$57,000 grant has been used to organize, catalogue, and store critically important land ownership and other property documents under the jurisdiction of the Kabul High Court. With disputes over land ownership having become a major issue as Diaspora Afghans and internally displaced persons return home, the availability of and access to existing property records has become an increasingly important matter for the Afghan government. Prior to this project, decades old property deeds and other related documents were in complete disarray, stored in the basement of a building where they were subject to mildew and decay. Only two people knew where to look for the records, but given the state of disarray at best they needed considerable time to do so or, at worst, they could not find them at all. "Before and after" photographs vividly illustrate the effects of the project - the documents have been catalogued, neatly organized and stored in custom-made metal cabinets, and access for custodians has increased dramatically.

Small-scale infrastructure activities have also helped women return to work and participate in community development efforts. In FY 2003, in response to requests from government officials and education representatives, OTI awarded numerous grants to construct kindergartens in Afghan ministries, schools, and universities to help women return to work or their studies. In one case, as the result of a \$10,000 grant for the renovation and equipping of the kindergarten at the University of Kabul, more than 50 women have been able to either begin their studies or continue where they left off. Since the newly-renovated kindergarten reopened in May, the number of children has increased from 40 to over 100. Similarly, an OTI grantee has found a creative way to employ women in a project to reinforce the walls of an irrigation canal in the Sorobi District of Kabul Province. The women have been shown how to construct gabion cages that help reinforce the canal walls and are doing the work in their homes in conformance with community norms. While this is admittedly not the full-scale women's empowerment activity envisioned by project planners, it nonetheless constitutes a chink in the cultural armor that defines roles and responsibilities in much of Afghanistan.

#### OTI/Burundi

From March 2002 through August 2003, OTI supported the Burundi Initiative for Peace, which provided small grants to promote good governance and citizen participation in support of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Accord (APRA). OTI provided support to indigenous civil society groups, the media, and the transitional government to increase discussion among diverse ethnic groups about public issues and encourage government institutions to be more transparent and accountable. During FY 2003, OTI funded 72 small grants totaling approximately \$880,000 to carry out these activities.

In addition, from March 2002 through March 2003, OTI provided support for a legislative strengthening initiative to enhance the roles of Burundian legislators in promoting peace and reconciliation. Activities under the initiative focused on raising awareness of roles and responsibilities under APRA, increasing dialogue and cooperation among legislators, and improving communication between legislators and constituents. Although activities related to this initiative continued well into FY 2003, funds were obligated for it during the previous fiscal year.

OTI's "Choose Peace" National Public Outreach Program, which was part of its legislative strengthening initiative, achieved great success in FY 2003. Parliamentarians, who at the outset of the initiative were hesitant to become involved, joined eagerly and requested that it be repeated after seeing how it constructively brought together national legislators, local officials, and citizens to discuss APRA and the role of the transitional government. The Social Councilor to the President of the National Assembly reported that the initiative was "a new phenomenon of gathering the population to share messages of peace and reconciliation and should be included in every public outreach program." In his remarks at the closing of Burundi's Senate in December 2002 and its reopening in January 2003, the President of the Senate acknowledged OTI's support in bringing Burundian legislators and constituents together so that the former could learn about the latter's needs.

In addition, to encourage the peaceful transfer of power from a Tutsi to Hutu president on May 1, 2003, OTI sponsored peace walks and radio programs and produced billboards and t-shirts as part of a Burundi Initiative for Peace-supported information campaign. The peace marches and rallies held at the end of April mobilized over 50,000 Burundians in every province, which was the largest grassroots mobilization for peace in the history of the country. The marches were covered extensively by the media and had such a positive impact that many people in the provinces requested that they be able to march for the following three Sundays.

#### OTI/DRC

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), OTI is working to help the country become more peaceful, unified, and democratic. To advance this goal OTI has focused on increasing availability of and access to balanced information, increasing informed public participation in important national issues, and expanding and strengthening linkages between communities. Activities under these objectives include a small grants initiative, Congo en Action pour la Paix (CAP) and a national radio initiative, Radio Okapi. CAP supports civil society's outreach and participation in the peace process, develops skills needed for advocacy, and re-connects like-minded groups and organizations throughout the country and with the Diaspora. Radio Okapi provides the population with balanced information on the peace process and also broadcasts OTI-supported programs - GUTAHUKA (Going Home) and Voices of Children - to strengthen the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration and resettlement (DDR) process and increase awareness of the child soldiers issue and corresponding need to involve youth in the peace process and community development. In FY2003 the OTI DRC small grants mechanism approved 48 grants totaling \$1,846,862.

During FY 2003, Radio Okapi has had a major impact on the peace process. For example, in South Kivu province meetings between government and opposition forces were covered by Radio Okapi and broadcast nationally. A reporter described the impact of the agreement on the ground and especially combatants' feelings and opinions on an end to the war. This reporting helped inform the general population about the progress being made in the peace process at the community and regional levels. Further reinforcing the progress being achieved, Radio Okapi later aired a program devoted to discussing

the impact of the peace process on daily Congolese life. The program focused on the positive changes in the DRC since its reunification and provided listeners with an opportunity to relate their views and opinions on the air.

Radio Okapi has also helped defuse potentially explosive situations and reduce tension in conflict-prone areas. In Bukavu (South Kivu province), the station played a key role in preventing further conflict by providing a means for belligerents to communicate with each other through aired programming. Station staff conducted an interview with one of the combatant leaders and broadcast this first attempt to re-open communications with his adversaries on the national network.

Similarly, after the commander of an armed group in Southern and Northern Lendu was arrested, rumors spread among Bunia's Lendu community that he was being tortured. As people began to congregate in the city, a Radio Okapi reporter went to verify the commander's condition and found him safe, fully clothed, and surrounded by his four bodyguards. Alerted about the rumors by the reporter, the commander agreed to broadcast a call for calm on Radio Okapi. When he did so, his statements, "I am fine and well treated, remain calm, and do not reply to provocations," the tense situation in Bunia calmed down quickly.

Radio Okapi's GUTAHUKA program has helped advance DDR efforts through regular broadcasts of messages directed at warring factions, urging a cessation in hostilities, withdrawal of foreign forces, and/or reestablishment of necessary security conditions. Such efforts, for example, helped persuade one of the most notorious former fighters of the Front Démocratique de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR) to return to his home in Rwanda. Recordings played on GUTAHUKA of greetings from friends, relatives, and immediate family members in Rwanda did the trick, as indicated in his subsequent statement to GUTAHUKA, "I have decided to return home due to the messages received from my mother and friends, and I hope all my soldiers in the Beni region will follow soon."

CAP initiative activities have also produced significant results. For example, a CAP grantee, Organisation pour le Sédentarisation, l'Alphabétisation et le Promotion des Pygmées (OSAPY), conducted six "sensitization" meetings between Bantu and Pygmy populations to increase the latter's integration in the community. In fleeing from local conflicts between armed groups, Pygmies have become internally displaced persons in areas dominated by Bantu ethnic groups. The Pygmies have been rejected in these communities and remain unassimilated. Under these circumstances, there are reports that as many as 20 Pygmies are crowded into a single hut, and because they are not allowed to get water in towns where Bantus live they may have to walk two kilometers to get access to a source. Responding to this situation, OSAPY brought together traditional leaders of both populations to discuss future collaboration between their two groups. After this meeting leaders of both groups signed a memorandum of understanding and peace in the presence of administrative authorities. The customary chief of one village allotted a plot of ground to Pygmies in the middle of the village as a sign of their integration.

#### OTI/Iraq

OTI's program in Iraq works through the USAID Mission in support of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). The program's objective is to support initiatives that build confidence among Iraqis regarding the transition from the prior regime to a participatory, stable, and democratic Iraq. OTI identifies and fills crucial gaps in U.S. government assistance efforts at the national and local levels and helps generate Iraqi support for the CPA via activities that provide quick, tangible improvements in peoples' daily lives.

OTI has been an active contributor to reconstruction and transition activities in Iraq since early April 2003. Initially, it played the role of "gap-filler," providing fast-paced assistance to meet critical needs that for a variety of reasons - e.g., funding not in place, lack of existing authority, contracts not yet mobilized, etc. - others in the USG could not provide. Since then, OTI activities have concentrated on: providing short-term employment; restoring basic government and community services; increasing public access to information and communication; preventing violence and protecting human rights; and, increasing Iraqis' participation in social, political, and economic life. As of September 30, 2003, OTI has committed or obligated \$58 million, \$24 million of which has gone toward funding for 322 small grants.

In keeping with its mandate to provide fast, flexible assistance, OTI awarded the first USAID grants in Iraq to groups in Umm Qasr. The grants, which were developed in consultation with the newly appointed Umm Qasr town council, were used to: renovate office space and provide equipment and training for the town council; refurbish sports facilities to provide recreational opportunities for the town's youth; and, create the first public communications center in Iraq with access to telephones and the internet. An elderly resident of Umm Qasr recently tried the newly available internet connection for the first time and was stunned by the speed with which he could read newspapers from across the world. He said, "Our society has been cut off from the world and now we are reconnected."

In response to the critical need to get organs of government damaged or destroyed by post-war looting and arson up-and-running as quickly as possible, OTI created the "Ministry in a Box" program. The program has rehabilitated more than 30 ministries and offices and provided them with kits of office furniture and supplies to enable staff to return to work. In August 2003 alone, for example, a record 17 such kits were delivered. Grants in support of these efforts totaled more than \$6.7 million in FY 2003. A deputy minister of agriculture, a beneficiary of the program, stated, "We are so happy now, we are finally going to be able to work. We had ten people working at one large table for a very long time."

Saddam Hussein's brutal regime silenced the voices of Iraq's women and men through violence and intimidation. The Iraqi people suffered human rights abuses for more than two decades under the Ba'ath regime, including rape, torture, imprisonment, and even death for opposing the regime. With the end of the regime, the Iraqi people have the historic opportunity to address the past abuses of the regime and promote justice and reconciliation in their society. OTI has been supporting nascent Iraqi human rights organizations that are working to promote tolerance, justice, and the rule of law, as well as preserve and document evidence of the Hussein regime's abuses in anticipation of a future war crimes tribunal or other transitional justice accountability mechanism. One such group, the Association of Free Prisoners (AFP), is working to document and investigate the fate of people who disappeared during the past regime. The AFP has taken the lead in collecting, recording, and safeguarding documentation pertaining to the imprisonment, abuse, execution, and disappearance of political detainees. As of September 2003, OTI had provided approximately \$4 million in small grants in support of such human rights initiatives in Iraq.

OTI is also supporting a variety of initiatives that advance the rights of women and help them retake their rightful place in the political, economic, and social life of the new Iraq. For example, in the south central and northern regions of the country, OTI has helped newly emerging women's organizations establish resource centers that provide education, job skills training, and social services to vulnerable women. A beneficiary at the OTI-supported Asuda Center in Suleymaniyah, for example, stated, "I have been here for three months [and] can't go home [because] I am afraid I will be killed by my husband. If I didn't have this place I would have nothing." In FY 2003, OTI provided more than \$3 million in small grants to help women improve their lives.

#### OTI/Macedonia

OTI's Confidence Building Initiative (CBI) began in October 2001, as part of a U.S. government commitment to help Macedonia from becoming the next Balkan state to erupt into ethnic violence. The CBI has worked to reduce tensions and mitigate conflict through confidence-building efforts linked to the Framework Agreement brokered by the United States and European Union in August 2001. To these ends, the CBI has focused on: supporting positive, community-based interaction among diverse groups; promoting citizen participation in community decision-making; fostering transparency, responsiveness, and accountability in the relationship between citizens and local governments; and, increasing public access to balanced information. In FY 2003, OTI awarded 220 grants totaling nearly \$6 million in support of the CBI. The CBI was closed out on schedule in September 2003, having issued a total of 495 grants amounting to more than \$11.5 million.

During the past year, CBI helped Macedonia's newly elected government with the national census, an undertaking that had been a major source of contention between ethnic Albanians and Macedonians when it was conducted in 1991 and 1994. CBI funding was used to develop and implement a three-point strategy to inform residents about the importance of the national census and encourage their participation. The strategy and the products it generated played an important part in the successful

completion of the census. A number of mayors reported that the information sheets CBI distributed helped them convey the importance of the census to their constituents. Similarly, three operators, who handled the hotline CBI helped advertise, reported receiving calls on a round-the-clock basis throughout the census survey period. Lastly, CBI multi-lingual advertisements and public service announcements motivated people previously excluded from the process to sign up for the census count.

CBI efforts also continue to focus on promoting citizen participation in community decision making. In one notable example, with CBI support more than 100 women in Radusa - an ethnically and politically divided village of 1,800 inhabitants near the northern border with Kosovo - got together to make their voices heard. For the first time in the history of the village, the women organized their own meeting to express their concerns and identify priorities for the community. Their concerns were not only heard, but resulted in an agreement to begin community reconstruction efforts with restoration of a pedestrian bridge leading to the village's only elementary school. This positive example of efforts to promote the role of women in community decision-making builds on nearly two years of OTI support for women's involvement at all levels and exemplifies CBI's success in working to give all community members a voice and the power to bring about change.

Fostering positive interactions among diverse groups and preparing Macedonia's youth for future civic involvement and public service are illustrated in the third CBI-sponsored Regional Democratic Leadership Camp. In this camp, high school students from various political, religious, and ethnic backgrounds and representatives of seven municipal governments came together for two weeks to form their own "Green City" (simulated municipality). As part of the exercise, students learned about local government, natural resource management, and small business development. This camp and its predecessors have been tremendously successful. Participants have formed strong relationships that have lasted well after the camps have finished. They travel significant distances to maintain these new friendships, overcoming geographic, ethnic, religious, and political divides to do so. In another promising outcome, a camp facilitator and students in their home municipality are continuing the multi-ethnic dialogue they began in the "Green City." Lastly, and perhaps most notably, the president of the Association of Mayors of Macedonia (ZELS) was so impressed by what he saw at the camp that he took the unprecedented step of inviting the "Green City" and its "residents" to become ZELS members. With this status, former camp participants will participate in ZELS meetings and have the opportunity to use their newly gained knowledge to weigh in on real life local government issues and problems.

Finally, the impact of CBI confidence-building efforts was demonstrated in a school crisis, which erupted in western Macedonia in October 2002 and exacerbated ethnic tensions and polarization. The situation arose when a local village council decided to rename a school after an ethnic Albanian World War II military figure. The decision prompted the complete withdrawal of ethnic Macedonian students from the school and the subsequent withdrawal of ethnic Macedonian students from five other ethnically mixed schools in the region. The situation grew more ominous with the shooting of an ethnic Macedonian student and death threats against ethnic Albanian students. The relationships CBI had built with the affected communities enabled its staff to quickly re-engage them and launch myriad local conflict-prevention activities. As a result, these communities did not experience violence or significant tensions. In addition, in recognition of CBI's strong ties in the region and effective conflict-mitigation work, the U.S. Ambassador invited CBI staff to meet with teachers, parents, students, and government officials elsewhere in western Macedonia to help them avoid conflict in their communities.

#### OTI/Peru

OTI's program in Peru was launched in February 2001, with the overall goal of supporting the democratic opening created by the fall of President Alberto Fujimori's government in November 2000. The program supported the transition government of Valentin Paniagua and later the newly elected government of Alejandro Toledo in five areas: civil/military relations; the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC); local government/decentralization; legislative strengthening/citizen-legislator relationships; and anti-corruption. By the time the program was closed in January 2003, OTI had funded 245 grants to local civil society organizations, the private sector, and the Peruvian Government, totaling \$6.58 million. Some 92 separate organizations were grant recipients and OTI-supported activities were implemented in all of Peru's 25 departments.

In the civil/military area, the goal was to increase civil society oversight and knowledge of the armed forces and involve civil society in decisions related to national security and defense. A total of \$850,000 was spent on 50 civil/military projects. Project activities included: training for legislators and staff, military personnel, civilians, and media representatives; sponsorship of public debates and dialogues involving legislators, civil society representatives, and/or military personnel; and, media information campaigns and workshops on the role of the media in civil-military relations. According to an August 2003 evaluation report, "...OTI's support had a major impact upon civilian military matters...[It] was instrumental in creating new civilian "interlocutors" on security and defense issues...; had a substantive impact on the congressional debate on key defense-related laws, and eased tensions between civilians and military, especially in the former emergency zones." The diverse activities enabled more than 7,000 civilians, 991 active-duty and 294 retired military to be trained, and project books, studies, and information campaigns reached an estimated three million people.

For the TRC, the goal was to support its efforts to document past human rights violations and promote reconciliation in Peru after 20 years of violence. To achieve this goal, OTI made 60 grants totaling \$1.8 million. The grants focused on: helping the TRC implement its work plan and activities; increasing citizen awareness of, knowledge about, and participation in TRC activities; and, increasing public confidence in the Commission's intended result. OTI-supported activities provided IT equipment, data-base design and training, fieldwork equipment, interviewer training, and publications/communications support. According to the evaluation report, OTI support "was critical in strengthening TRC capacity to carry out its mission. Citizen awareness and knowledge of the TRC increased, participation in the work of the Commission was broadened and confidence that the TRC was listening to and recording real human stories increased." The report further points out that OTI funding enabled the TRC to receive and process close to 15,000 human rights violation testimonies, while also contributing to the quality of the latter by training interviewers, supplying them with emotional support, and overseeing the editorial quality of the transcriptions.

OTI efforts in support of local government/decentralization sought to increase civil society and local governments' understanding of and involvement in the decentralization process, while promoting increased citizen awareness and participation in local governance. Toward this end, 39 grants amounting to \$1.63 million were funded. The funding supported public sessions of the Congressional Decentralization Commission, a massive public information campaign, and workshops, public forums, and other courses on best practices of participatory democracy at the local level. According to the evaluation report, OTI "support was essential in broadening citizen input in important national legislation concerning decentralization and local governments.... [and] in supporting local democratic governance [through] training on...citizen participation" in 641 (30 percent) of the country's district municipalities. OTI's program helped key state officials better understand and respond to citizen demands concerning decentralization, while also contributing to the development of a more responsible, realistic public attitude towards decentralization.

OTI's goal in working with the Peruvian Congress was to strengthen its institutional, political, and administrative operations and improve citizen-legislator relationships. Under the OTI program, some \$1.3 million was spent by 25 groups on 36 projects. Specific activities included the training of staff and members of Congress, preparation of studies or diagnostic materials on congressional reform, organization of decentralized congressional hearings and policy debates, workshops and training events on the role and functions of Congress, information campaigns, and town hall meetings. "OTI's congressional project," according to the evaluation report, "was partially successful..." While 50 members of Congress and 400 staff received training and five offices or commissions carried out public hearings, difficulties were encountered in scheduling activities with members and in some members' reluctance to interact with civil society. On the other hand, the effort to increase citizen understanding of Congress and participation in the legislative process was more successful. Seven thousand people participated in activities - e.g., the debates on constitutional reform and training courses on Congress - sponsored by Congress and financed by OTI. At least 10,000 Peruvians, including elementary, high school, and university students, academics, and leaders of grassroots groups were trained on the role and function of Congress, through workshops, videos, board games, and plays.

OTI anti-corruption efforts aimed at increasing civil society interest and involvement in new national initiatives to combat corruption and establishing citizen oversight groups to monitor the use of public anti-corruption resources. OTI financed a total of 38 anti-corruption projects totaling \$1.01 million. Project activities included training public officials, civil society organizations, and journalists, supporting debates on anti-corruption issues, and information campaigns. According to the evaluation report, results in this area were mixed. In terms of outputs, the OTI program was productive, resulting in: 148 workshops that trained almost 4,300 participants; four radio campaigns that reached an average of 600,000 people; anti-corruption fairs attended by an estimated 50,000 people; and, four information pamphlets that were distributed to an estimated 10,000 people. In addition, six local area vigilance networks and NGOs in six target areas outside Lima received training on how to develop anti-corruption oversight activities. However, as far as changing attitudes and corrupt practices are concerned, "no significant changes" were detected between the national survey baseline established in November 2001 and a follow-up survey conducted in November 2002 after the OTI program had been completed. Commenting on this, the evaluation report notes: "For a country the size of Peru, with 26 million people and a land area twice the size of France, the expectation that an investment of one million dollars over 18 months could leverage measurable national level action on anti-corruption primarily driven by civil society organizations may have been unrealistic." Indeed, a national survey funded by OTI in December 2002, showed that 70 percent of those polled either had a high or medium tolerance for corrupt acts.

#### OTI/Sri Lanka

In support of efforts to end the protracted conflict in Sri Lanka, OTI has worked to demonstrate the tangible benefits of peace, increase the amount and exchange of information on peace issues, and reduce or prevent violence in conflict prone communities. To accomplish these objectives, OTI has instituted a small grants program focused on promoting: positive interaction among diverse groups at the community level; increased citizen involvement in community decision-making; improved livelihoods and skills training; and greater dissemination of balanced information and differing points of view. Since the program was launched in March 2003, 66 small grants worth approximately \$1.6 million have been approved.

Working with local NGOs, community groups, media entities, and government officials, OTI has identified and supported activities to move Sri Lanka further along the continuum from war to peace. For example, one of the first small grants funded by OTI went to the Muslim Rights Organization to compile a registry of Muslim lands forcibly expropriated by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) during the war in the Eastern Province. The registry was needed to record land claims in this multi-ethnic region, where levels of communal violence during the war were high, so that the LTTE could fulfill a commitment to the Sri Lankan Muslim Congress to facilitate the return of these properties. During the seven-month project, a total of 14,872 separate cases involving a total of 62,670 acres - most of it farmland - were recorded.

The impact of this \$46,166 project on Muslim-Tamil relations in the East was evident even before the activity had ended. In late September 2003, reflecting progress on the land registry, LTTE leaders guaranteed Muslims safe farming access to 30,000 acres of land in the Ampara and Batticaloa districts for the upcoming season. Furthermore, as a byproduct of the grant, committees comprised of Muslims and LTTE representatives were established in 18 villages throughout the province to resolve disputes related to the land registry process. Donors, NGOs, and Sri Lankan authorities charged with monitoring the current ceasefire agreement have credited these committees with preventing new conflicts over land and reducing the potential for clashes over other fractious issues in the eastern part of the country.

Another notable example of OTI-supported efforts in Sri Lanka is the Deniyaya Housing Challenge, a joint initiative formulated by eight community-based organizations (CBO), in consultation with local government officials, to build 100 houses in 60 days in an area devastated by the May 2003 floods and earth slides. Under the CBOs' plan, out of 290 families whose houses had been totally destroyed in the Kotapola area, 100 families (557 Sinhalese and Tamil men, women, and children) from among the poorest strata were selected, regardless of creed, cast, or ethnic background.

The project relied on 15 Sinhalese and Tamil young men and women between the ages of 18-22, who

had received training on rural leadership and team building skills. These youth volunteers, who were themselves victims of the floods, supervised the construction at the project's 10 sites. In addition, 100 local masons underwent special training before they were contracted to work on the houses. OTI contributed \$100,000 in supplies and the beneficiary families contributed sand, rubble, and labor for the construction of their homes. The project started on August 7, 2003 and was completed on time in early October.

As with the land registry, indications of the Deniyaya project's significance appeared even before it was completed, when it was featured on a Sri Lankan radio program. After briefing listeners on the devastation in the Deniyaya region caused by the May floods, the broadcaster explained how the CBOs rose to the challenge with the assistance of USAID. OTI's program development officer then discussed how USAID has been working to build constituencies for peace throughout the country, emphasizing that undertakings such as the Deniyaya Housing Challenge are only possible when conflict is absent.

Just as important, in addition to the tangible benefits of the houses, the project offered an opportunity for unskilled laborers from the involved communities to work alongside with and learn from skilled tradesmen. This provided them with both an immediate source of income and a new skill. At least two subsequent OTI grants involving reconstruction in the Deniyaya region plan to tap into this supply of newly-skilled labor in these upcoming activities.

#### OTI/Sudan

OTI's work in Sudan links ongoing peace processes to initiatives that promote increased participation of southern Sudanese in their governing structures. The OTI program has worked to strengthen responsible governance and civil society development, increase access to quality, independent information, and promote the cause of peace and stability. To accomplish these objectives, OTI activities have focused on developing a short wave local-language radio service for southern Sudan, fostering demand for good governance, and providing rapid, targeted support to governance and peace-building efforts. In FY 2003, OTI funded one grant for \$82,352 in support of these activities.

Since its launch in July 2003, the OTI-supported Sudan Radio Service has had an almost immediate and continuing impact. The Service is broadcasting in nine languages, including Juba-Arabic, English, Arabic, Dinka, Nuer, Moro, Zande, Bari, and Shilluk, representing the wide diversity of groups in southern Sudan. Its news programming has been a constructive force in the peace process, keeping people informed and up-to-date on the negotiations between the Government of Sudan and Sudan People's Liberation Movement. The Service has elicited a significant response from stakeholders and interested parties from across the globe. Letters from Sudanese listeners, for example, have arrived from all parts of East Africa and as far away as Sweden. The Service has broadened its programming to include profiles of local and international organizations working in southern Sudan and cultural topics, such as a series exploring the unique traditions of the Nuba Mountains.

In the area of promoting good governance, OTI has been working to strengthen the rule of law by increasing the independence and effectiveness of the judiciary and developing governmental structures and processes in southern Sudan. With OTI funding, an implementing partner has procured motorbikes, spare tires and parts, and fuel to assist judges in moving about the vast areas of southern Sudan. Twelve motorbikes, along with 10 Codan radios, were delivered to the southern Sudanese Judiciary Management Committee (JMC), headquartered in Rumbek. The radios and motorbikes are intended to help judges overcome travel and communication difficulties that limit their ability to resolve cases and dispense justice in a timely fashion. These items are being distributed to county judges throughout southern Sudan. The county judges received training on the equipment and to ensure its proper use and maintenance, the JMC and OTI partner drew up a set of guidelines that each recipient judge signed as an affirmation that they would be followed. The equipment will test the judges' ability to manage resources provided by the donor community, and hopefully engender a commitment by the southern Sudanese judiciary to create better internal management systems.

#### OTI/Venezuela

Launched in August 2002, OTI's Venezuela Confidence Building Initiative (VICC) has supported efforts to

reduce political tension and strengthen the country's governmental institutions. Part of a larger U.S. government effort to promote democratic stability in Venezuela, the VICC is working to facilitate and enhance dialogue between the country's two opposing political camps and strengthen its democratic institutions and processes, including political parties. In support of these objectives, OTI awarded 66 grants totaling just over \$2 million during the program's first year of operations.

The VICC has been successful in helping to change the nature and tone of political discourse in Venezuela. As the initiative was launched, political actors were talking about a change in government through non-democratic means and there were persistent rumors of a military coup to overthrow the government. As of September 2003, national political discussion has focused on resolving the crisis through peaceful, democratic, and constitutional means. While a number of factors have contributed to this change, OTI has played an important role in providing space for dialogue between the two sides.

OTI has supported several activities that have contributed to increased dialogue between the opposition and the government. One is the signed accord between the Government of Venezuela and the opposition - an agreement brokered by the Carter Center and the Organization of American States, with funding and support from OTI for meeting space and professional facilitation. Another is the "Boston Group," 19 government and opposition members of Venezuela's National Assembly who met in Boston last year at the invitation of U.S. Congressmen Cas Ballenger, William Delahunt, and Roger Meeks. Since that initial meeting, OTI has supported four local events with the Boston Group: a workshop on conflict management; publication of their "manifesto" (a communique to the people of Venezuela stating their intention to work for a peaceful and democratic solution to the on-going crisis) in Venezuela's leading newspapers; a forum in Caracas; and, a highly publicized event at a local university. These efforts have demonstrated that opposing viewpoints need not translate into hostility, but in fact can be a springboard for resolving differences based on shared interests and concerns.

Yet another illustration is the OTI-supported project that brought together residents from upper middle, middle, and lower class communities, along with a number of academics, in a series of five workshops to discuss coexistence and ways to address the effects of the violent confrontations they experienced during and after the national strike. Project activities reinforced attitudes, behaviors, and values supportive of coexistence between opposing groups in these neighborhoods. The project trained 100 representatives from the communities and local university to transmit the coexistence message and work to come up with action plans. A tangible result has been the formulation of eight projects, which demonstrate that neighboring communities can work together rather than against each other to solve their common problems.

**Country Close and Graduation:**

N/A

## Results Framework

### **965-001 Political transitions successfully advanced in priority, conflict-prone countries**

#### **SO Level Indicator(s):**

% final evaluations finding significant impact in strengthening democratic processes or increasing momentum for peaceful resolution of conflict

% of target population assisted or engaged in participatory initiatives

% programs that have increase in access to unbiased information by target population on key transition issues.

% programs that have sustainable handoff strategy in place after 18 months of start-up