

**Democracy Fellows Program**  
**USAID Cooperative Agreement Number: DFD-A-00-05-00114-00**

**FINAL REPORT**

**Submitted to:**  
**USAID/DCHA/DG**  
**Washington, D.C.**

**Submitted by:**  
**Academy for Educational Development**

**January 18, 2006**



## **Introduction**

The Democracy Fellows Program (DFP) Cooperative Agreement (DFD-A-00-05-00114-00) was awarded to the Academy for Educational Development (AED) on May 24, 2005, by the U.S. Agency for International Development, Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance, Office of Democracy and Governance (USAID/DCHA/DG). The stated program goal of the Democracy Fellows Program was to build a cadre of field-experienced technical experts committed to careers in democracy and governance. Its program goals were two-fold: (1) to help USAID's efforts to promote and strengthen the evolution of democratic practices and institutions in transitional or emerging democracies, through provision of fellows who can provide USAID with technical assistance, policy evaluation, analysis, and program implementation, and 2) to support individuals pursuing careers in the international democracy/governance field.

The original grant agreement was estimated to be a \$12.7 million dollar award over a period of five years. On September 14, 2005, however, following several weeks of discussions between USAID and AED related to potential organizational conflict of interest (OCI) issues, USAID and AED signed a project modification which, by mutual agreement, terminated the grant agreement on October 31, 2005. In response to a subsequent request from USAID, due to the inability of World Learning to ensure the continuity of the individual Fellows' security clearances on November 1, 2005, USAID and AED signed a second modification which extended the AED grant agreement to December 31, 2005.

## **Accomplishments**

During the *start-up phase* of the Democracy Fellows Program, beginning on May 24, 2005, AED Democracy Fellows Program staff:

- Ensured the continuity of security clearances for the eight Democracy Fellows being transferred from World Learning to AED (Ms. Laura Burnham, Mr. John Granville, Mr. Andrew Green, Ms. Shanthi Kalathil, Ms. Caroline Sahley, Ms. Angana Shah, Ms. Julie Werbel, and Ms. Maryanne Yerkes). AED's Facility Security Officer (FSO) processed the transfer of the clearance from World Learning to AED electronically via the Defense Security Service (DSS). The FSO issued Visit Authorization Letters (VALS), which granted the Fellows clearance to continue entering secure USAID facilities on June 15, 2005. In addition, AED facilitated the signing by each of the Fellows (in Washington, D.C. and Nairobi, Kenya) of Standard Form 312 (SF 312), the "Classified Information Nondisclosure Agreement," which states the obligations of security cleared personnel.
- Hired the eight Democracy Fellows as full-time AED employees with benefits, effective June 15, 2005. The Fellows were briefed on AED personnel benefits issues at a new employee orientation on June 8, 2005. Ms. Burnham and Mr. Granville, based in Nairobi, Kenya, received their employment and benefits information by e-mail and courier and were briefed separately by telephone conference call on June 16, 2005. The Fellows' AED health benefits became effective on July 1, 2005, per AED

policy. With the exception of Ms. Sahley, who terminated her employment with AED on August 31, 2005, and Ms. Shah, who transferred back to World Learning on October 31, 2005, all of the Fellows remained AED employees until the close out of the AED Democracy Fellows grant agreement on December 31, 2005.

Throughout the life of the AED Democracy Fellows grant, AED accomplished the following:

- Submitted all required deliverables, as amended by DFP CTO Susan Pologruto. AED provided USAID with regular financial reports during the course of the grant agreement, as well as the budget projections as described below. This final report is submitted to satisfy the remaining deliverable requirement as specified by USAID/DCHA/DG.
- Arranged for and supported all work-related Democracy Fellow travel through October 31, 2005, when World Learning assumed this responsibility. This involved making travel reservations, purchasing air tickets, providing advances (as appropriate), and providing per diem. AED DFP staff assisted Democracy Fellows in all aspects of travel arrangements, including the completion of AED required expense reports. The following is a summary of the Democracy Fellow trips supported by AED from May 24, 2005 to October 31, 2005:

<b>Traveler Name</b>	<b>Dates of Travel</b>	<b>Location of Travel</b>
Burnham, Laura	1) June 20-25, 2005 2) Aug 01-07, 2005	1) Wajir, Kenya 2) Kampala, Uganda
Granville, John	1) June 20-July 20, 2005 2) Sept 10-16, 2005 3) Sept 29- Oct 22, 2005	1) Rubek, Sudan 2) Khartoum, Sudan 3) Washington, DC
Sahley, Carol	1) August 14-21, 2005	1) Bogotá, Columbia
Werbel, Julie	1) July 1-Aug 12, 2005 2) Sept 8-Oct 16, 2005	1) West Bank/Gaza 2) Pakistan and West Bank/Gaza
Yerkes, Maryanne	1) Aug. 2-31, 2005	1) Ethiopia

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<sup>1</sup>The actual grant agreement was not signed and effective until June 6, 2005.

- Provided day-to-day support to each of the Democracy Fellows in all aspects of program administration, including the following:
  - ⇒ Salary and benefits, including health and educational benefits;
  - ⇒ Arrangement for Fellows' travel (see separate section above);
  - ⇒ Assistance with travel-related expense reports;
  - ⇒ Special benefits and allowances (for overseas staff);
  - ⇒ Assisting with the completion of individual Democracy Fellows' timecards and ensuring timely salary payments;
  - ⇒ Troubleshooting individual problems with electronic timecards;
  - ⇒ Responding to individual questions related to AED benefits, including health benefits and educational benefits;
  - ⇒ Approving and processing individual requests for AED educational benefits; and
  - ⇒ Processing travel-related and other expense reports and issuing reimbursements.

Following the *mutual decision to terminate the AED Democracy Fellows grant* (see Challenges section below), AED Democracy Fellows Program staff:

- Prepared reports on DFP spending to date and budget forecasts in response to specific requests from USAID/Contracts. AED was asked to submit (1) our actual and accrued costs through July 31, 2005, along with projected costs through September 30, 2005; and (2) projected costs for the month of October 2005. Since the forecasts depended heavily on planned Democracy Fellow travel plans, AED consulted with each of the Fellows and with DFP CTO Susan Pologruto to ensure that all travel anticipated through October 31, 2005, was included in the budget forecasts.
- Worked closely with USAID and World Learning to ensure a smooth "second transition." Organized a planning meeting on October 3, 2005, attended by Ms. Susan Pologruto (CTO) and representatives of both AED and World Learning. Issues discussed included the transfer of Democracy Fellows' security clearances from AED back to World Learning, termination date for AED payroll and benefits for Fellows (October 31, 2005), Fellows' salary, benefits, and allowances information, and recruitment. Following this meeting, AED worked closely with World Learning to transfer all necessary information for World Learning to pick up the various responsibilities of the Democracy Fellows program between November 1, 2005, and January 1, 2006.
- Completed all necessary paperwork to ensure the continuity of the Democracy Fellows' security clearances. This required facilitating the signature by all Democracy Fellows of the SF 312 form. AED's FSO then proceeded to "outprocess" the Fellows in the DSS system.
- Communicated regularly with each of the Democracy Fellows throughout the transition, to ensure that their questions and concerns were addressed. Most of these communications were related to final expense reports, enrollment in COBRA to extend AED health benefits, final paychecks, and the security clearance issue.

## **Challenges**

By mid-June 2005, it had become apparent that the nature of several Democracy Fellows' direct work in the area of democracy-governance project design raised serious concerns about the potential for organizational conflict of interest (OCI) issues under AED's management of the DFP. During the next several weeks, AED and USAID representatives engaged in a collaborative and constructive dialogue geared toward identifying a solution to the OCI challenge. On July 18, 2005, however, it was mutually agreed that an early termination of the grant was in the best interest of all parties involved.

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Following the mutual decision to terminate the AED Democracy Fellows Program on October 31, 2005, it became evident that World Learning would not be granted a new facilities clearance in time to ensure the continuity of the individual Fellows' security clearances by the time of the transfer. USAID asked AED to extend its grant agreement through December 31, 2005, in order to provide continued coverage to six of the Democracy Fellows requiring clearances (Laura Burnham, John Granville, Andrew Green, Shanthi Kalathil, Julie Werbel, and Maryanne Yerkes). The grant agreement was extended through December 31, 2005, with AED continuing all services to the Democracy Fellows with the exception of travel-related services, which were assumed by World Learning on November 1, 2005.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the challenges outlined above, AED Democracy Fellows Program staff enjoyed the cordial, collaborative, and professional relationships we had with USAID staff, World Learning staff, and the Democracy Fellows themselves during the life of the program. We were very happy to facilitate the Fellows' critical work for USAID, both in Washington and overseas.