

Circling the Globe ...
A Sampling of USAID's Alliance Activity

United States Agency for International Development



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In recent years, a number of USAID initiatives, including those listed below, have been developed in the similar spirit and with similar objectives to the Global Development Alliance (GDA), if not on such a comprehensive scale. These examples are just the beginning.



The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization. The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), is a partnership between the Gates Foundation, which provided a \$750 million financial commitment, USAID, international institutions including the World Bank, UNICEF and the World Health Organization, the pharmaceutical industry, and governments from North and South. It is designed to address three problems: that every year 30 million children are still not receiving vaccinations; that only children in developing countries are receiving new life-saving vaccines; and that current market forces don't encourage the development of vaccines against diseases most prevalent in poorer countries, such as malaria and diarrhea. The GAVI partners have initially focused their efforts on three major areas: moving resources to developing countries to increase immunization; augmenting the generous Gates Foundation commitment; and working with the vaccine industry to modernize the way vaccines are purchased for children in the world's poorest countries.

Chocolate/Coffee Production and Distribution Alliances. USAID has developed, since 1997, a genuinely global strategic alliance with the Chocolate Manufacturers' Association and several key member companies, notably Mars Corporation. A similar global strategic alliance has also developed over the last two years with the Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA) and thousands of participating members that spans the gamut from the giant Starbucks to numerous "mom & pop" retailers, roasters and producers. Both industry groups share donors' strategic concern for small-scale tropical farmers and forest conservation. They need a sustainable, environmentally sound, and profitable, community of suppliers of the higher quality commodity on which their industry depends. In turn, USAID has benefited from in-kind contributions of technical assistance, research findings, and preferential purchasing terms to USAID-assisted farmer groups. The chocolate manufacturers, for instance, are contributing over \$1 million per year in-kind and in cacao purchasing premia to these collaborative efforts; and similar leveraging of technical assistance and resources is also coming for instance from Seattle's Best Coffee to coffee producers in Peru. USAID activities in at least ten African countries (under the regional African Tree Crop Initiative) and a similar number in Latin America and Asia, are involved in these alliances. More recently, the high-tech information industry has also taken an interest, as a basis for "bridging the digital divide" through e-commerce and remote sensing and geographic information systems (GIS) technologies to assure product source and quality, especially in coffee.

United States Energy Association (USEA) Partnership Program. The Energy Partnership Program promotes efficient, sustainable, and environmentally sound supply and use of energy through the peer-to-peer transfer of market-based approaches and "best practices" for energy system operation and regulations. It is grounded on the voluntary, pro-bono participation of U.S. energy companies and organizations. Under the Energy Partnership Program, USEA has established over 80 utility and regulatory partnerships in 32 USAID-assisted countries. Over 8,000 utility and regulatory executives have participated pro-bono in USEA partnership activities (1/3 from U.S. and 2/3 from overseas). Since inception, 50 U.S. electric and gas utilities and 21

U.S. regulatory commissions have volunteered the time of their senior executives to the program. U.S. partners include Georgia Power, Texas Utilities, Enron, Sacramento Municipal Utility District, Pennsylvania Power & Light, PSE&G of New Jersey, Kentucky Utilities, and regulatory commissions from Massachusetts, Ohio, Idaho, Kansas, Oklahoma, Illinois, and Minnesota. In developing countries, these partnerships have resulted in:

- ▶ Accelerated restructuring and commercialization of previously state-owned utilities
- ▶ Improved regulations for tariff-setting, utility performance standards, efficiency programs and consumer involvement
- ▶ Increased efficiency and environmental performance of power generation, transmission, distribution; and energy end-use
- ▶ Greater regional cooperation on energy issues.

Global Alliance to Improve Nutrition (GAIN) The Global Alliance to Improve Nutrition (GAIN) is an alliance of public and private sector organizations seeking to improve health through the elimination of vitamin and mineral deficiencies. GAIN policies and operating structures are currently under development. Preliminary partners include: USAID, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, CIDA, The World Bank, UNICEF, WHO, private food companies, and NGOs/PVOs. GAIN will make grants to developing countries in support of food fortification and other sustainable micronutrient interventions in order to save lives and improve health and productivity. GAIN will combine the strengths of public and private sector organizations to mobilize private industry, international donors, and US foundations in support of food fortification, tapping the expertise and resources of the corporate sector in technology transfer, business development, and trade.

U.S.-Asia Environmental Partnership (USAEP). USAEP is an interagency partnership of USAID, the Department of Commerce, and EPA, focused on the environment and economic growth in Asia. This partnership has in turn forged various other partnerships including the State Environmental Initiative and the Environmental Technology Fund Program. The State Environmental Initiative is a major partnership program of USAEP with the Council of State Governments (CSG). It matches the regulatory and environmental experience of U.S. states with Asian needs for environmental and energy efficient technologies and services. Through this partnership, USAEP has invested about \$5 million in 36 projects involving 23 states and 11 Asian economies. Partners have matched these grants with more than \$7.7 million, resulting in \$5.5 million in confirmed sales and a dozen Memoranda of Understanding. Eighty-five U.S. companies, 110 state agencies, 35 academic institutions, and several dozen NGOs are participating in this effort. A second USAEP program involving partnerships with U.S. states is the Environmental Technology Fund program with the National Association of State Development Agencies. The Fund provides matching grants of up to \$20,000 to small- and medium-sized U.S. firms to help penetrate the Asian market for their environmental goods and services, usually via technology demonstrations, training, and technical assistance. The U.S. firms sometimes partner with Asian private sector firms and sometimes with public sector entities. Since its inception in 1992, the Fund has made grants to companies in 46 states totaling about \$6.5 million, generating more than \$350 million in export revenues and more than 850 new U.S. jobs.

Global Technology Network. The Global Technology Network (GTN) is a network of domestic and international partners that assists U.S. small- and medium- sized firms seeking access to emerging overseas markets. GTN matches a local company's development needs with U.S. firms equipped to provide the appropriate solutions. GTN partners are linked together with an Internet-based communications and trade lead system. Follow-up on trade leads is provided through outreach offices in California, Florida, and Illinois, U.S. Export Assistance Centers and 35 state trade partner organizations. GTN works with USAID missions to establish in-country business support centers to provide local business services and market linkages. GTN works in Africa (12 countries), Asia and the Near East (15 countries), Europe and Eurasia (12 countries) and Latin America (3 countries). The GTN program won the Public Service Excellence Award 2000 for creative partnering in international activity.

Eastern Europe Partnership for Environmentally Sustainable Economies (Eco-links). This program is designed to promote partnerships among businesses, local governments and

associations to identify and remedy environmental problems, adopt best practices, and increase trade and investment in environmental goods and services. Eco-links supports environmental technology representatives who assist in engaging U.S. environmental companies in resolving key problems in such countries as the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland. The program also makes challenge grants to businesses, local governments and environmental associations to address priority environmental problems. To date, challenge grants have been made in Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary. Eco-links also supports the transfer of technology among Eastern European countries. For example, a company in Hungary assisted a Bulgarian company in the manufacture of environmentally friendly cold storage facilities.

The Millenium Alliance for Social Investment. The Millennium Alliance for Social Investment develops and helps to sustain alliances between businesses and nonprofit organizations--alliances that create wealth and improve the quality of life for the communities involved. The cooperative venture between INMED, a U.S. PVO, and USAID assists businesses and nonprofits find matches with each other for strategic community investments. Training and technical assistance is provided as needed to make the partnerships work. Examples of alliances include:

- ▶ Smith-Klein Beecham and Children International in nine Latin American and Asian countries
- ▶ Nestle and the Churches Medical Association in Zambia
- ▶ Merck and the Conference Board in Russia
- ▶ Johnson and Johnson and Children's Health in Asia
- ▶ The Foundation for Social and Economic Development of the Americas and the MontiCristi Global Consortium in the Dominican Republic and Haiti

USAID's role in the venture has increased as its strengths became evident in practice to PVOs and private enterprise.

Matching Grants. This \$35 million grants program for U.S. PVOs requires formal partnerships between PVO recipients and local NGOs, U.S. corporations, local businesses, local governments, and other counterparts. USAID leverages a dollar for dollar match for field activities in multiple Agency sectors, and a 25 percent match for child survival. It is a partnership program that, in the context of field programs, also focuses on organizational capacity building at headquarters of U.S. PVOs and transfers organizational and technical capacity to the local level. Twenty-nine new three-to-five year grants to U.S. PVOs are planned under this program in 2001.

TechnoServe Alliances for Rural Economic Growth. In 1998, with a mix of funding from USAID and private sources, TechnoServe developed and launched a new strategic plan that has fundamentally altered its mission and approach. TechnoServe's mission was revised from one of "poverty alleviation" to one of "economic growth for the rural poor." Its approach has broadened from one of technical assistance to community-based agricultural enterprises (primarily rural coops and associations) to one of strategic, managerial, financial, marketing and technical assistance to a broad range of businesses, provided on the condition that the businesses have a direct and positive impact on low-income rural men and women. To implement this new mission, TechnoServe has hired a new generation of local professionals recruited from the private sector and trained in finance, marketing, accounting, and engineering. It has then supplemented this team with world-class partners through alliances with a range of global private partners. For example, TechnoServe is now working with:

- ▶ McKinsey & Company, world leaders in business strategy, to assist rural clients from Tanzania to Nicaragua to analyze industry trends and operational strategy
- ▶ Young & Rubicam, the global advertising giant, to assist rural clients in Mozambique to develop branding strategies and brand identities for their goods and services
- ▶ Cargill, the world's largest privately-held agribusiness, to assist rural clients to develop competitive oilseed businesses in southern Africa.

Fair Labor Association. USAID, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of State, manages a multi-year \$1,489,000 cooperative agreement with the Fair Labor Association (FLA), a not-for

profit organization committed to addressing violations of internationally-recognized labor rights in the apparel and footwear industries in the United States and abroad. The FLA represents a broad coalition of businesses, labor, and human rights organizations, and colleges and universities which has developed a workplace code of conduct with provisions on child labor, forced labor, harassment, abuse, nondiscrimination, occupational safety and health, freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, wages and benefits, and hours of work. The U.S. government's funding has leveraged significant private investments to support the initial start-up costs of the organization, the implementation of the accreditation and monitoring program, membership expansion, and corporate and consumer education and outreach.

Public-Private Agricultural Research Programs. Over the last 10 years, USAID has directly supported several public-private sector collaborative research programs, largely through the Agricultural Biotechnology Support Program (ABSP). Led by Michigan State University, ABSP represents partnerships between a number of U.S. universities, U.S. and developing country companies, the International Agricultural Research Centers (IARCs), and developing country public research institutions (NARS or National Agricultural Research Systems). The public-private sector partnerships USAID has supported include:

- ▶ Monsanto Company and the Kenyan Agricultural Research Institute (KARI). This was the first USAID biotechnology-related public-private partnership, with research aimed at development of virus resistant sweet potatoes. The KARI-Monsanto partnership has continued long beyond direct USAID support or funding.
- ▶ DNA Plant Technologies and Costa Rican and Indonesian-Owned Tissue Culture Companies. This private sector-led research project undertook research on development of commercial scale micropropagation systems for tropical crops, including bananas, pineapple, and coffee. The Costa Rican company and DNA Plant Technologies have continued to work as business partners though USAID funding ended several years ago.
- ▶ ICI Seeds and Central Research Institute for Food Crops (CRIFC)/Indonesia. This partnership focused on development of insect-resistant tropical corn and included training of CRIFC scientists at ICI Seeds in use of proprietary transformation technologies. It ultimately faced difficulty in negotiating technology transfer agreements for proprietary technologies.
- ▶ Pioneer Hi-Bred and Egyptian Agricultural Genetic Engineering Research Institute (AGERI). This partnership permitted research by AGERI to be commercialized.

The Higher Education Partnership for Development. This partnership is a cooperative agreement between USAID and the American Council on Education with other partners including The Association of Community Colleges, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, the Association of American Universities, the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges. One portion of the agreement supports partnerships between higher education institutions in the United States and in cooperating countries to demonstrate how they can apply their expertise collaboratively to global and locally based development challenges. The individual partnerships reach out to other in-country development partners as appropriate. The program is active in all USAID regions including Africa (7 countries), Asia and the Near East (8 countries), Europe and Eurasia (3 countries) and Latin American and the Caribbean (11 countries).

Telecommunications Leadership Program. The Telecommunications Leadership Program (TLP) is a USAID-Department of State Interagency Agreement (IAA) that serves as a worldwide mechanism for telecommunications policy and regulatory reform assistance. TLP provides assistance in breaking down barriers to private sector investment and improving telecommunications infrastructure. In target countries/regions, USAID, together with the Federal Telecommunications Commission (FCC), National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), Department of State and host country governments, identifies key policy/regulatory needs, and works in partnership with the U.S. Telecommunications Training Institute (USTTI) and the U.S. telecommunications industry to provide needed training and policy assistance. Assistance is through policy/regulatory needs assessment, training, and technical assistance. Countries in which the initiative is active include Haiti, Jamaica, Kenya, Nigeria and Morocco.

Civil-military partnership. The purpose of the agreement is to foster civil-military relations that are compatible with and are conducive to democracy. The partnership is between the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs and the Center for Civil-Military Relations (CCMR) of the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California. In addition, the partnership presently consists of three contributing partners: the Universidad Torcuato di Tella and SER (Seguridad Estrategica Regional), and the Institute for Security and Development Studies (ISDS) of the Philippines).

>*Conservation International and Starbucks Coffee.* Linking market incentives with the need for resource conservation, Conservation International has partnered with Starbucks Coffee in a USAID matching grants-supported program to promote more remunerative and environmentally sound coffee production in the buffer zone surrounding the El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve in Mexico. By helping small farmers shift to sustainable growing techniques, the project assists them in capturing a significant market premium for 'certified' organic coffee. The financial basis for this alliance has been parallel investments by Conservation International and Starbucks, with the goal of achieving mutually compatible development and environmental objectives. Both organizations provide development services in the form of essential technical assistance to local farmers and coffee producers' cooperatives. Success in developing a reliable flow of certified premium coffee has enabled Conservation International to enlist additional retail outlets in the United States and Europe. These partners - Starbucks Coffee, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, Frontier Cooperative Herbs, Rapunzel Pure Organics, and the Organic Products Trading Company - have also contributed more than \$450,000 for direct project activities, demonstrating the leveraging effect of successful business-environment alliances.

Baltic American Partnership Fund (BAPF). This public-private partnership was created jointly by the Open Society Institute (OSI) and USAID to strengthen civil society in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The Fund is capitalized at a total of \$15 million, including \$7.5 in the form of an endowment from USAID and a matching grant of \$7.5 million from OSI. BAPF became a fully functioning independent U.S. nonprofit organization in 1999. Its mission is to enhance opportunities for the people of the three Baltic republics to develop a vigorous civil society and take an activist role in shaping their democracies. Local intermediary organizations in each of the three Baltic states are charged with designing programs and re-granting funds to support the NGO communities in each Baltic country. Examples of organizations currently being helped include the Latvian Human Rights Institute, the Lithuanian Farmers Union, and the Estonian Newspaper Association.

Partners for Financial Stability (PFS). Managed by the East-West Management Institute, this activity uses a variety of mechanisms to link regionally financial sector institutions, professional associations, research and policy institutions, and institutions of higher learning. The objective is to use the combined strength of these linkages to support continued reform in the financial sector, including improved bank supervision, securities regulation, and capital markets institutional development. Cross-border visits, joint training sessions and data linkages are important instruments being used to support this effort.

Eastern Europe NGO Partnership Grants. This \$2 million grants program is focused exclusively on small U.S. PVOs (capitalized at less than \$6 million) who have existing technical partnerships with NGOs in the Eastern European graduate countries such as Lithuania and Poland. The objective is to support efforts by these U.S. entities to continue to strengthen their counterparts who play such a pivotal role in under-girding civil society's contribution to key areas such as community development, environmental protection, human rights, the special needs of women and children, and business development. Eight grants to U.S. PVOs are expected under this program in 2001.

American Bar Association/Central and Eastern European Law Initiative (ABA/CEELI). ABA/CEELI was first launched in Eastern Europe and soon thereafter expanded to the former Soviet republics with grants from USAID. Grants for CEELI work continue in the region and continue to rely on the pro-bono work of CEELI volunteer liaison attorneys, as well as on a broad range of U.S.-based experts who provide written commentaries on host country draft legislation. CEELI works with local counterparts in the region and is currently working with USAID to set up a

regional continuing legal education institute that is expected to draw heavily on the resources of local partner organizations. Overall, it is planned that the Institute will achieve financial self-sufficiency through a combination of the USAID funding, a privately funded endowment, and contributions from private sector resources. It is planned that other donors will provide over 83% of the total operating costs of the Institute. The total cost of the program over a five-year period is approximately \$11.3 million.

Winrock International. Three successive Matching Grants from USAID allowed Winrock to implement a series of innovative farmer-centered collaborative programs that successfully increased seed production, soil conservation/fertility and food production at the smallholder level. Winrock and its university collaborators attracted the attention of other donors as well as commercial business and foundations that began to provide significant support.

- ▶ Monsanto initially awarded Winrock a small grant. Subsequently Monsanto expanded its support by awarding Winrock two additional grants for conservation tillage work worth over \$600,000: one to a regional West Africa program, and the other to Indonesia.
- ▶ The Rockefeller Foundation provided a grant to enable the Winrock program staff to move quickly to bring in strains of mosaic-resistant cassava to the farmers of western Kenya.
- ▶ The McKnight Foundation made a grant to Winrock to strengthen its work on improved millet and sorghum in Mali and Senegal and enabled the program to extend into Niger.
- ▶ In East Africa, Cargill International awarded Winrock two grants to work in Tanzania on cotton-based cropping systems.

All of these projects have built upon the foundations laid by the USAID funding and attest to the ability of Winrock to use this core support from the matching grant to leverage over \$20 million in financial resources.

The Partnership for Educational Revitalization in the Americas (PREAL). PREAL is a hemispheric partnership of public and private sector organizations seeking to promote informed debate on policy alternatives, identify and disseminate best education practices emerging in the region and elsewhere, and monitor progress toward improving education policy. PREAL includes actors from civil society, governments, universities, political leaders, the business community, international organizations, and churches. To achieve its objectives, PREAL carries out activities such as support for national advocacy groups promoting dialogue and debate on educational reform; regional working groups, workshops and conferences examining policy alternatives for reform; professional exchanges involving national policy specialists; and research on important but relatively neglected education reform issues. USAID is PREAL's main funding source and has provided about \$7 million to the PREAL program over five years. The Inter-American Development Bank has contributed about \$2.5 million, and private sector foundation have provided another \$1 million over the period. USAID provides general policy and technical guidance to PREAL and works cooperatively with PREAL to determine its work agenda. In addition, USAID attempts to introduce the educational reforms and best practices promoted by PREAL into its bilateral programs in the region.

The Alliance to Save Energy. The Alliance to Save Energy, a bipartisan coalition of over 75 energy efficiency product manufacturers and service providers, utilities, large industrial end users, environmental organizations, and state energy offices, has a demonstrated record of partnership with the U.S. private sector. With funding from USAID, the U.S. Department of Energy, and several foundations and private sector grants, the Alliance's Energy Efficiency Industry Partnership Program has developed into a recognized model for the development of market transformation programs and policies in the developing and former communist countries. In partnership with cutting edge U.S. energy-efficiency companies such as Honeywell, Johnson Controls, Whirlpool, Trane, Osram-Sylvania, and Armstrong, the Alliance works to disseminate information on energy-efficiency technologies and services to the global marketplace through educational seminars and trade missions, business roundtables, and the creation of energy efficiency industry associations. Companies provide their labor and travel costs at no expense to the Alliance or USAID in return for the opportunity to interact with potential customers and counterparts in the countries USAID serves.

West Africa Gas Pipeline. Four countries in West Africa, Benin, Ghana, Nigeria, and Togo are seeking to better utilize gas resources in Nigeria, to power demand growth in the other three countries. A new gas pipeline, the West African gas pipeline (WAGP) which will cost approximately \$450-\$600 million, is now the centerpiece of the region's strategy to boost non-traditional exports, diversify industrial structures, create regional markets, and initiate a collaborative approach to sustainable resource exploitation. Successful implementation of the WAGP project requires all four nations to complete a series of cross-border agreements while simultaneously harmonizing their respective regulatory environments. At the present time, the four sponsoring governments lack sufficient capacity to negotiate a commercially built and operated pipeline. They also lack the regional enabling frameworks that are essential to developing a transnational gas pipeline project. USAID assistance focuses on analyzing the impacts associated with the project, developing the terms and conditions of pipeline concession agreements, and strengthening the capacity of governments to negotiate and implement a concession agreement with the private sector project development team headed by Chevron.

Polish-American Freedom Foundation. The foundation is a permanent not-for-profit philanthropic organization for Poland financed by the Polish American Enterprise Fund (PAEF). The PAEF, established in 1990, is the most successful of all the enterprise funds established in the region with U.S. Government financing. It has returned \$120 million to the U.S. Treasury, and is using another \$180 million to create the Freedom Foundation. The Foundation, just created in the past year, will carry on the work of private sector development in Poland by supporting economic reforms, educational advancement programs for social and economic leaders, and the development of non-governmental organizations. It will also assist local government to foster local private enterprise.

South Africa: AIDS Workplace Prevention Programs. With support from USAID and the Centers for Disease Control, Ford Motor Company and The American Center for International Labor Solidarity are working in partnership in South Africa to design and implement work-place based interventions on HIV/AIDS. Local partners include the three national-level trade union federations and their affiliate unions, the South African Ministry of Health, the South African AIDS National Council, the National Economic Development and Labour Council, the South African National Association of People with AIDS, the Township AIDS project, the South African AIDS Law Project, the AIDS Legal Network, the South African Medical and Dental Practitioners, and the National Association of Traditional Healers Organization for Africa.

Madagascar road-building and maintenance. Madagascar's agricultural growth is significantly hampered by poor physical infrastructure. A cycle of building and subsequent deterioration of roads led USAID to promote a program with the government (at the national, provincial and communal level) to involve local villagers and private firms in road rebuilding and maintenance. Applications for road projects are reviewed for potential traffic and commerce flow by an intersectoral committee at the provincial level. Villagers are organized into road users' associations and are formally mandated by the government to be responsible for building and maintaining the roads. They learn the technical skills from private road contractors and use volunteer energy to do the physical work. The roads are maintained by the associations, using tolls, government subsidies and membership fees to finance the activities. Accomplishments include:

- ▶ Formation of 13 village road users' associations in the province of Fianar.
- ▶ Rehabilitation and maintenance of 191 km of dirt road within two years.
- ▶ Devolution of road maintenance authority to road users' associations and creation of intersectoral committees to review road building and maintenance needs.

Tanzania Private Sector Foundation (TPSF). The Tanzania Private Sector Foundation was established with USAID support in late 1998 and has become the apex organization for private sector discussions with the government, representing Tanzania's private sector in trade discussions and government expenditure reviews, and helping to set up a National Business Forum to facilitate government-private sector dialogue. At the invitation of the Government, the TPSF attended the World Trade Organization meetings in Seattle as the only private sector group in the delegation. The TPSF is currently working with the GOT in designing the GOT's overall

development strategy, the Tanzania Assistance Strategy (TAS). In 1999, ninety-six business associations joined the Foundation. USAID support has also focused on efforts to ratchet up the dialogue between the government and the private sector about next steps in legal and regulatory reform pursuant to issues and recommendations contained in the Investor Roadmap. In an unusual partnership, the GOT, Members of Parliament, the private sector, NGOs, USAID and other donors have worked together to develop a Policy Framework for MicroFinance. This policy is aimed at placing rural and microfinance in Tanzania on a sound path by ensuring that all participants in the emerging industry have clear and effective guidance.

South Africa: Increased funding for housing and urban services through public-private cooperation. The municipal environmental infrastructure sector program achieved impressive results that directly complemented the work in local government service delivery. Policy support aimed at increasing public and private resources for the provision of environmental infrastructure was at the forefront of these efforts. USAID assistance in drafting a new municipal borrowing bill, to assist in reviving South Africa's \$1.5 billion municipal debt market, commenced with high level consultations between key public and private sector partners, and was further complemented by final inputs into South Africa's new legal and regulatory framework for public-private partnerships, without which private concessions to support environmental infrastructure would not be possible.

Kazakhstan: Atyrau Regional Initiative. The Atyrau Regional Initiative is a multi-donor effort in which USAID technical assistance, exchanges, and training for the oblast, city, and rayon governments is smoothing the way for numerous other activities. These include:

- ▶ calculating water rate increases and facilitating hearings as preconditions to a World Bank loan for the municipal water system
 - ▶ rethinking the role of local government in economic development to enable the work of the UNDP-Chevron Business Center (which will incubate small businesses) and the Citibank-funded micro-credit loan program
 - ▶ the adoption of public budget hearings as a vehicle for citizen participation
 - ▶ the official development, training, and use of competitive procurement standards by the Agency for Procurement.
-