



FRONTLINES

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Guatemala is working to protect its rich biodiversity. See pages 8-9.



This lizard makes its home in a Guatemalan tropical forest.

Photo by Robert Goodier, Rainforest Alliance

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Nye Goes From USAID to Congress

The newly elected Democratic congressman from Virginia Beach, Va., Glenn Nye, was settling in to his new office on Capitol Hill in January, far away from the dusty streets of Baghdad—where he spent much of 2007 as a USAID development officer.

"USAID seems a long time ago—before the campaign," said Nye, a photogenic, athletic man propelled by voters into his office at the Cannon House Office Building.

"So far I've found USAID has a good reputation up here," he said in a recent interview with *FrontLines*. "Most times when I mention I worked for USAID, people say it's good. They are pleased to hear it."

Nye was a Foreign Service Officer at the State Department who left for the grittier work of development projects in Afghanistan and Iraq because he loved to be out in the field. A search of congressional employment records shows that Nye is apparently the second USAID employee to subsequently become a member of Congress. The first was Rep. Sander Martin Levin (D-Mich.) in 1983.



Rep. Glenn Nye (D-Va.) at USAID headquarters, Baghdad, Iraq.

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Obama's Mother Worked for USAID, World Bank, in Indonesia

By Ben Barber

President Barack Obama's mother, Ann Dunham Sutoro, spent more than 20 years in Indonesia working on a range of development tasks for USAID, the Ford Foundation, the World Bank, and other organizations.

She was an early pioneer in providing microcredits to the poor, and helped bring education to poor children and adults. She also worked to preserve ancient village crafts and improve the lives of women.

"Like me, Ann was a child of the

'60s who ended up in Indonesia, ready to take up challenges," said Kay Ikranagara in a telephone interview with *FrontLines* from



Ann Sutoro (left) and her close friend Kay Ikranagara in 1975 at their children's bilingual play group in Jakarta.

Photo courtesy of Kay Ikranagara

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Agency Expanding Response Through New Civilian Corps

USAID plans to hire 41 new officers between March and May as part of a new U.S. interagency Civilian Response Corps (CRC) dedicated to rebuilding and stabilizing regions entering, in, or emerging from crisis or conflict.

"These will be first responders," said Elisabeth Kvitashvili, deputy assistant administrator of the Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) bureau, which is charged with managing the Agency's CRC program through a new Office of Civilian Response (OCR).

Currently, U.S. and other aid agencies deliver emergency food and medicine after natural disasters or development aid to boost economic growth. The Corps will focus on restoring rule of law and stabilizing war-torn societies as a precursor to sustained economic growth.

The 41 new USAID officers will be the largest contingent in a 103-strong active component of the CRC representing eight separate agencies—the Departments of State, Treasury, Justice, Commerce, Agriculture, Health and Human Services and Homeland Security as well as USAID. If additional Corps funding is provided for fiscal year 2009, USAID plans to recruit an additional 56 active component members as part of the larger interagency plan.

The Corps has three components being formed under the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS). Active members are available for deployment within 48 hours of call up. The standby component at USAID consists of experienced direct-hire volunteers, currently numbering 72 members. Standby members supplement the active component staff and are deployable within 30 to 45 days of a major stabilization crisis for up to six months. The third component (not yet

see **RESPONSE** on page 14 ▶



Photo by USAID

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton visits a USAID project to provide clean water and sanitation facilities for residents at the Petojo residential area in central Jakarta Feb. 19. Clinton, on her first trip abroad as Secretary of State, visited Japan, Korea, and China in addition to Indonesia. See story on page 4.

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WHAT THEY ARE SAYING ...

A column devoted to what our partners and others in the field of foreign assistance are saying about development.

The United States Can Reclaim “Smart Power”

Hard and soft power used together can give the country the tools to lead.

By Joseph S. Nye Jr.

President Obama reminded us [Jan. 20] that “our power grows through its prudent use; our security emanates from the justness of our cause, the force of our example, the tempering qualities of humility and restraint.” A week ago, in her confirmation hearings to become secretary of state, Hillary Rodham Clinton said: “America cannot solve the most pressing problems on our own, and the world cannot solve them without America.... We must use what has been called ‘smart power,’ the full range of tools at our disposal.”

Smart power is the combination of hard and soft power. Soft power is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. Opinion polls show a serious decline in American attractiveness in Europe, Latin America and, most dramatically, the Muslim world.

The resources that produce soft power for a country include its culture (when it is attractive to others), its values (when they are attractive and not undercut by inconsistent practices) and policies (when they are seen as inclusive and legitimate).

When poll respondents are asked why they report a decline in American soft power, they cite American policies more than American culture or values. Because it is easier for a country to change its policies than its culture, this implies that Obama will be able to choose policies that could help to recover some of America’s soft power.

Of course, soft power is not the solution to all problems. North Korean dictator Kim Jong Il likes to watch Hollywood movies, but that is unlikely to affect his nuclear weapons program.

And soft power got nowhere in attracting the Taliban government away from its support for Al Qaeda in the 1990s. That took hard military power in 2001. But other goals, such as the promotion of democracy and human rights, are better achieved by soft power.

A little more than a year ago, the bipartisan Center for Strategic and International Studies’ Commission on Smart Power concluded that America’s image and influence had declined in recent years, and that the U.S. had to move from exporting fear to inspiring optimism and hope.

The commission was not alone in this conclusion. Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates has called for the United States to commit more money and effort to soft-power tools, including diplomacy, economic assistance, and communications, because the military alone cannot defend U.S. interests. He pointed out that military spending totals nearly half a trillion dollars annually—excluding Iraq and Afghanistan—compared with a State Department budget of \$36 billion. In his words: “I am here to make the case for strengthening our capacity to use soft power and for better integrating it with hard power.”

The Pentagon is the best resourced arm of the government, but there are limits to what hard power can achieve on its own. Promoting democracy, human rights, and the development of civil society are not best handled with the barrel of a gun. The effects of the 9/11 terrorist attacks threw America off course. Terrorism is a real threat, but over-responding to the provocations of extremists does us more damage than the terrorists ever could. Success in the struggle against terrorism means finding a new central

premise for U.S. foreign policy to replace the “war on terror.” A commitment to providing for the global good can provide that premise.

America can become a smart America—a smart power—by again investing in global public goods, providing things people and governments of the world want but have not been able to get in the absence of leadership by the strongest country.

Development, public health, and coping with climate change are good examples. By complementing U.S. military and economic might with greater investments in soft power, and focusing on global public goods, the U.S. can rebuild the framework that it needs to tackle tough global challenges.

Style also matters. In 2001, columnist Charles Krauthammer argued for what he called “a new unilateralism,” which recognized that the United States was the only superpower and was so strong that it could decide what was right and expect others to follow because they had little choice. But this style turned out to be counterproductive. Insensitivity to style and the perception of others can undercut soft-power efforts.

Obama faces a difficult international environment, but previous presidents have managed to employ hard, soft, and smart power in equally difficult contexts. In 1970, during the Vietnam War, America was viewed as unattractive in many parts of the world, but with changed policies and the passage of time, the United States managed to recover its soft power. It can happen again.

Joseph S. Nye Jr. is a former chairman of the National Intelligence Council and teaches at Harvard. He is the author of “The Powers to Lead.” He is the coauthor, with Richard Armitage, of “A Smarter, More Secure America,” the Center for Strategic and International Studies commission report on smart power. This article first appeared in the Los Angeles Times Jan. 21, 2009. ★

FEWS NET Predicts Food Troubles in Horn of Africa

By Ashtar Analeed Marcus

About 3.1 million people in Somalia are facing critical food shortages during the early part of 2009, according to a half-year forecast released by the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET).

The prediction by the USAID-funded network comes

on the heels of food shortages that affected 18.8 million people across the Horn of Africa since November, according to the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance.

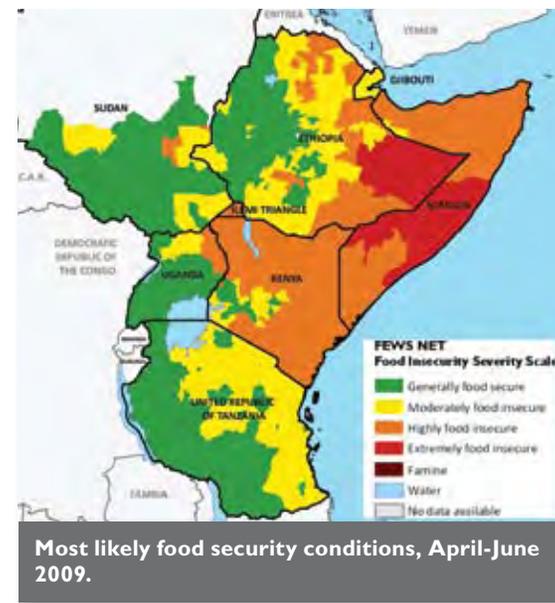
Central and south Somalia and eastern and southern Ethiopia are the “hot spots where conditions are expected to be worst,” FEWS NET officials said in a Jan. 31 written statement. FEWS NET in East Africa monitors Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Despite the concern over “hot spots” in Somalia and parts of eastern and southern Ethiopia, conditions in the first half of 2009 are not expected to be as bad as they were at the close of 2008.

“The take away message is that the *Belg* [rainy] season may not be great, but at this point, we’re not concerned about the failure we were concerned about earlier,” said Chris Hillbruner, a FEWS NET food security early warning specialist.

Ethiopia’s *Belg*, or *Gu*, season of short rains from about February through June heavily determines food availability in grazing areas starting in March and in many cropping areas from July to December.

The FEWS NET prediction scale ranges from “generally food secure” to “famine.” And while no famine has been detected yet, officials said central and south Somalia and Ethiopia’s Somali Region are expected to remain at the “extremely food insecure”



Source: FEWS NET

level—just below famine.

In Somalia—the hardest hit region—3.1 million people lack food. Recent rains were 50 percent below normal and neighboring Kenya, where many Somalis have migrated, is considering closing its border with Somalia due to the large numbers of refugees. Meanwhile, as Ethiopian peacekeeping troops withdrew, civil security was at risk of declining, officials said. NGOs have suspended some food distribution to the area because of insecurity.

“Everything that could go wrong continues to go wrong [in Somalia],” Hillbruner said. “Half the population is highly or extremely food insecure.”

Bordering Somalia, Ethiopia’s Somali Region—the region predicted to be second-hardest hit—had consecutive seasons of poor rains in 2008. Increased food prices and ongoing conflict have also contributed to reduced access to food.

In spite of drought, Djibouti is stable, or “food secure,” because of large-scale food distribution from aid organizations. The U.N. World Food Program began a food aid program there in January.

“For the time being, the immediate issue is being resolved through food aid, but the underlying issues, like high food prices and poor pasture conditions, remain,” Hillbruner said.

FEWS NET also covers Afghanistan, Haiti, Guatemala, and 17 countries in West Africa, East Africa, and Southern Africa. ★

MISSION OF THE MONTH



Macedonian children benefit from an improved learning environment in renovated schools.

MACEDONIA



educational software, and teacher training on ICT.

Results

To date, over 10,000 primary school teachers have been trained in ICT, interactive teaching, math, science, and assessment methods. Forty-six primary schools have been renovated, with an additional 80 planned within the next two years. Over 1,500 Roma students have received educational support, resulting in increased school retention and higher academic achievement.

USAID and the Macedonia Office of Defense Cooperation worked together to renovate four schools for children with special needs.

“Thanks to USAID, we received new windows for our classroom. I’m not cold and sick anymore and enjoy going to school,” said Ana Georgieva, 14, a student at Vera Ciriviri Trena Primary School in Skopje.

Asen Prlickov, director of Vasil Glavinov Primary School in Veles, said: “The school greatly benefited from the project—we received 16 computers and 60 professors were trained on ICT. The kids do feel more comfortable in coming to school—the modern equipment helps them to be more focused. Classes are more interesting and interactive for the children as the teachers are using new and creative methods of teaching.”

By 2011, USAID plans to have renovated one-third of the primary schools in Macedonia, serving 80,000 students. The Agency will renovate at least one school per municipality.

Interested in learning more about the project? Go to www.pep.org.mk. In addition, to see a short video highlighting the school improvement program go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=jC5gSJWy-Do. ★

INSIGHTS

FROM ACTING
ADMINISTRATOR
ALONZO FULGHAM



I write this prior to departing for the Middle East, where I will be privileged to represent the Agency at the International Donors Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, and to visit our missions in Cairo and Amman. I look forward to highlighting the important and painstaking work our missions undertake throughout the region to help create a brighter future for its citizens.

I was proud to see USAID’s work featured prominently during Secretary of State Clinton’s recent visit to Indonesia and expect that our Agency’s contributions will continue to be highlighted in her travel schedule during the months and years ahead. As development specialists, we have dozens of stories to tell—and we need to continue to tell them well.

Even as Secretary Clinton and Deputy Secretary Jacob Lew make the case for a strengthened and revitalized role for development as an essential element of U.S. “smart power,” we are taking that same message to Congress, the Office of Management and Budget, the National Security Council, and the First Lady’s Office. Among other things, that includes working to ensure sufficient funds to rebuild the Agency, and that USAID is seen as a resource on development policy and implementation.

As we together engage in this important work, let me note three areas where we can all make a difference:

Leadership: USAID has the largest concentration of knowledge and know-how about development in the U.S. government. We should be proactive in making that knowledge available across other departments and agencies. Our ability to engage on important development issues depends upon our ability to demonstrate our skill, commitment, and creativity. Leading by example, we become the source of good ideas and sound, pragmatic advice. We also make ourselves indispensable as far as any discussions related to development are concerned.

Outreach: USAID already participates in policy discussions on issues from food security and climate change to future approaches to Iraq and Afghanistan. Here again, we have a wealth of expertise as well as hands-on experience. Within the U.S. government, USAID staff assigned to State, the combatant commands and the National Security Council enrich the debate immeasurably. We can all look for ways to further share that experience, not only within the foreign policy community but among the broader American public as well.

Communication: There is no doubt that effective communication helps us all to do our jobs better. Yet, communication within the Agency has historically been one of our greatest challenges. As a result, we have put in place three systems to improve the flow of information within Washington and between Washington and the field.

First, we have reinstated the Chief Operating Officer’s biweekly update to the Agency. (Visit <http://inside.usaid.gov/COO/> to read previous updates.) Second, we recently launched the USAID “Sounding Board” (<http://communities.usaid.gov/soundingboard/>), an initiative aimed at promoting Agency innovation and reform. I want to encourage all of our people in the field and in Washington to contribute your best thinking to this important initiative. I look forward to sharing your ideas with the Secretary and with the next Administrator.

Third, the Office of the Chief Operating Officer has launched a blog entitled “AIDSPEAK” (<http://communities.usaid.gov/coo/>) to keep the Agency abreast of key events and issues and to foster a dialogue amongst USAID personnel. I encourage you to visit AIDSPEAK and to let us know (aidspeak@usaid.gov) what we can do to improve the site.

Finally, let me close by once again expressing my appreciation for your hard work as well as your continued skill and commitment in the midst of this historic transition. ★

Computers and School Renovations Boost Macedonia’s Education

By Biljana Velickovska and Corinne Dalenson

Challenge

In education performance, Macedonia lags behind other transition countries—those that changed from socialism to free market economies after 1990—international studies show.

Many schools have not been renovated for decades and do not provide students or teachers with a good environment for learning and teaching.

As Macedonia prepares to join the European Union, the education system needs major improvements, especially in infrastructure, access by minorities, and updated curricula. Many students fail to find jobs after completing their education because their skills do not match the labor market requirements of the 21st century.

Innovative Response

To address these challenges, USAID launched the Primary Education Project in October 2006, which directly engages teachers, parents, municipalities, and relevant ministries. The project identified short- and long-term

educational improvements: new teaching methods to stimulate critical thinking and problem solving; renovating schools; and expanding use of computers and the Internet.

Project organizers agreed that schools should stimulate young people, encourage discovery, and provide a safe and comfortable environment.

Parents and teachers helped with classroom design and scheduling renovations. They decided to create “green schools” to encourage youth to develop and apply environmental awareness. Municipalities took up the “green” banner to create cost-effective learning environments that use energy-efficient building materials to conserve resources while improving school quality.

To prepare students for the educational demands of the job market, USAID, with the Macedonia Ministry of Education, modernized the technical education curriculum in primary schools. Many teachers asked for increased access to Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) in primary schools. USAID supplied new computers for the schools,

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS

BRIEFS

Clinton Visits USAID Project in Indonesia

JAKARTA—Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton visited a USAID development project and pledged to increase U.S. development aid during her first overseas travel since her appointment by President Barack Obama.

During a Feb. 19 stop in Indonesia, Clinton pledged to boost U.S.-Indonesia cooperation on climate change, trade, education, regional security, and other issues.

"I bring greetings from President Obama, who has himself said and written about the importance of his time here as a young boy," Clinton told reporters.

She also announced plans to restart Peace Corps programs in Indonesia that were suspended in 1965 when volunteers were expelled after leftists accused them of espionage.

Polls Show Hard-Line Islamists Losing Ground

JAKARTA—Indonesia—the most populous Muslim nation—is abandoning hard-line Muslim parties, according to recent polls cited by the *Wall Street Journal* Feb. 19.

Only 7 percent of voters—down from 16 percent in 2004—favor the two largest Islamist parties according to the latest polls for parliamentary elections in April. The elections will be followed in July by a nationwide presidential vote.

Five years ago, extremist Islamists were attacking hotels, embassies, and nightclubs while some local governments passed Islamic Sharia laws banning alcohol and requiring women to wear headscarves.

Since then, Islamic militants have been arrested and convicted by Indonesian courts. No major attacks have taken place in the past four years and no local governments have issued Sharia laws since 2006.

Wheat Fungus Spreads in Kenya

GREAT RIFT VALLEY, Kenya—A new version of a wheat fungus is ravaging crops in Kenya and spreading beyond Africa to threaten one of the world's principal food crops, according to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Stem rust, a killer that farmers thought they had defeated 50 years ago, surfaced here in 1999, jumped the Red Sea to Yemen in 2006, and turned up in Iran last year. Crop scientists say they are powerless to stop its spread and increasingly frustrated in their

efforts to find resistant plants.

Nobel Peace laureate Norman Borlaug, the world's leading authority on the disease, said that once established, stem rust can explode to crisis proportions within a year under certain weather conditions.

"This is a dangerous problem because a good share of the world's area sown to wheat is susceptible to it," Borlaug said. "It has immense destructive potential."

Last March, the FAO confirmed that the fungus had spread to Iran and said in a news release that "Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan, all major wheat producers, are most threatened by the fungus and should be on high alert."

Swiss Take \$6M from Duvalier Accounts for Haiti Aid

BERN—The Swiss government said Feb. 12 it will give to aid groups in Haiti some 7 million Swiss francs (\$6 million) seized from bank accounts linked to Haiti's former dictator Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier.

The Duvalier family—ousted after a popular uprising in 1986—failed to prove a legitimate origin of the money and is therefore not entitled to the assets, the Federal Office of Justice said.

The Swiss Foreign Ministry said it will select which aid organizations in Haiti will receive

the money for social or humanitarian projects to benefit the Haitian population.

Haiti urgently needs food and drinking water for hundreds of thousands suffering from the impact of four tropical storms and hurricanes last year.

Switzerland banking secrecy rules have been changed, and have led to the return to Nigeria of \$730 million linked to the late Nigerian dictator Sani Abacha.

Africa Holds Summit on Economic Crisis

ADDIS ABABA—Leaders at the African Union summit Feb. 3 discussed how to ride out the global economic downturn, fearful of cuts in trade, aid, and development finance.

Leaders warned that the global downturn and record commodities prices could end years of growth in many African countries.

"Unless we act, and act now and decisively, the majority of African states could become failed or failing states over the coming decade," said Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi.

African Development Bank President Donald Kaberuka warned that many infrastructure projects risked losing financing due to tightening global credit. Falling oil prices also hit exporters such as Nigeria.

Africa's economic growth slowed by around 1.4 percent last year to 5.4 percent, and estimates

for this year are at a full point lower, the World Bank said.

Gates Foundation, Corporations Invest \$90M for African Farmers

SEATTLE—The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation said Feb. 19 it is investing \$48 million and private corporations are chipping in another \$42 million to help small-scale farmers in Africa improve cocoa and cashew harvests.

"We hope to move more than 1.5 million people out of poverty in a relatively short time frame," said Dr. Rajiv Shah, the foundation's director of agricultural development.

Among the companies giving cash and in-kind contributions are The Hershey Co., Kraft Foods Inc., Mars Inc., Archer Daniels Midland Co., Cargill Inc., Armajaro, Olam International Ltd., and Starbucks Corp.

Cocoa is West Africa's largest agricultural export and accounts for 70 percent of the world's supply.

The Gates Foundation will hire local scientists, agriculture outreach workers, and educators to help the farmers. "We have learned that African farmers will listen to other Africans," Shah said. "Even corporate sponsors with Western names hire local people to work on the ground."

From news reports and other sources. ★

U.S. Gives \$6.8M to Zimbabwe Cholera Crisis

By Chris Thomas

USAID is providing emergency assistance to the people of Zimbabwe to address a cholera outbreak that began in August 2008. To date, the epidemic has killed more than 3,700 people in a country already hobbled by political and economic chaos.

Cholera is affecting all 10 provinces and 56 out of 62 districts in Zimbabwe, according to the World Health Organization. As of Feb. 20, more than 79,000 cases of cholera had been reported.

USAID has provided nearly \$6.8 million for emergency relief supplies, water, sanitation, hygiene, and health care.

Cholera—an easily preventable

and treatable intestinal infection—is usually transmitted through contaminated water or food. The bacteria cause profuse watery diarrhea and, without adequate treatment, can lead to death by sudden dehydration. Those who are malnourished can be at especially high risk of death.

The most important treatment is simple rehydration, which consists of prompt replacement of the water and salts lost through severe diarrhea and vomiting. Early rehydration, which USAID has helped fund, can save the lives of nearly all cholera patients. Most can be rehydrated quickly and easily by drinking large quantities of a solution of oral rehydration salts.

Though cholera typically emerges seasonally in Zimbabwe on a small scale, the number of cases and the inability of local

Azerbaijan Moves to Avoid Downside of Oil Wealth

By Paul Davis

"Dutch disease" or the "resource curse" refers to countries that have windfall profits from oil or other natural resources—but the good luck turns bad.

(Dutch disease refers to a 1960s economic crisis in the Netherlands precipitated by a decline in the manufacturing sector after natural gas was discovered.)

Azerbaijan may be the latest example—two years ago new oil and gas production led to a dramatic influx of foreign revenue that drove up the value of the Azeri currency, making local industries unable to compete with cheaper foreign goods.

Increased government spending—a byproduct of the

increased oil revenues—fed domestic inflation. About one-fifth of Azerbaijanis lived below the poverty line.

USAID worked with Azerbaijan, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to ensure the country's oil earnings are managed efficiently and transparently, and benefit the people.

In late 2007, Arnold C. Harberger, USAID's chief economic advisor, visited Azerbaijan for two weeks to share his more than 50 years of experience working with developing and transitional economy countries on similar challenges. Harberger emphasized to key economic officials the need to:

- ▶ spend oil income at a moderate pace to limit inflation and save for the future;
- ▶ be sure infrastructure and other improvements are cost effective; and
- ▶ increase trade and agricultural productivity.

Over the past year, the USAID mission in Azerbaijan worked with the State Oil Fund to improve oversight. Once adopted, this will strengthen protection of the fund for future generations.

USAID also worked with the government on: trade reforms that helped jumpstart previously dormant negotiations and move the country closer toward membership in the World Trade Organization; a market-oriented food security strategy; and improved Central Bank policies that helped stem inflation and

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see CHOLERA on page 11 ▶

State Deputy Secretary Lew Visits Agency

Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Jacob Lew came to USAID headquarters Feb. 3, three days after he was sworn in to his new job, and told a senior staff meeting he would seek greater resources for USAID and U.S. foreign assistance in general.

“The challenges in my assignment are many [but Secretary Clinton and I] will do all we can to get the resources needed for USAID.”

Lew served as director of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget under former President Bill Clinton from 1998 to 2001 and has been assigned by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton to try to obtain the resources so that development and diplomacy can be seen as equals with defense in America’s foreign policy.

Regarding the Agency’s ongoing effort to double the Foreign Service by 2012—the Development Leadership Initiative—Lew said: “If we don’t grow the number of Foreign Service and USAID direct hires, we can’t be in all those places around the world.”

The current financial crisis was also on his mind and he called on employees—even if they do their jobs well—to do it more efficiently.

“We can’t do business as usual,” he said. “We want to roll up our sleeves and do the job we



Jacob Lew

all do more effectively,” Lew said.

Over the past eight years, the Agency “added new models to its portfolio and now it is time to stand back and ask if they are the right tools to achieve our objectives,” he said.

Lew noted that his interest in assisting the needy dated back to when he was 16 in New York City and worked on the March on Hunger.

Before ending his visit, Lew also met with senior officials and staff at the Agency’s operations center and spoke with employees in the Asia and Middle East bureaus.

Since the initial meeting, Lew has become a frequent visitor to the Ronald Reagan Building, as he receives briefings from each of USAID’s bureaus on their programs, priorities, and budget issues. ★ – B.B.

Paula Loyd Dies 2 Months After Afghan Attack

Paula Loyd, 36, a former USAID officer in Afghanistan, died Jan. 7 from burns she suffered in an attack two months earlier while serving as an adviser to U.S. troops in an Afghan village.

In a memorial ceremony at USAID headquarters in Washington Feb. 3, Loyd’s parents and colleagues recalled her service to the Afghan people during difficult times.

“It was an honor to have worked with your daughter—she was an inspiration to me,” said Tom Baltazar, head of the USAID Office of Military Affairs.

Loyd was “a quiet professional—when she spoke people listened,” he added.

The political counselor of the Afghanistan Embassy, Ashraf Haidari, said that President Hamid Karzai respected her as “a true dedicated humanitarian.”

“I found her [to be like] an Afghan,” said Haidari. “The Afghan nation is truly grateful for her service.”

After working as a USAID field program officer in the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Zabul Province in 2004, she worked with the United Nations, helped the Afghan elections, and helped organize the Ft. Bragg training program for new officials heading out to spend a year in PRTs (see the *FrontLines* article in the November 2008 edition for more information). Eager to get back

into the field, she worked as a “human terrain advisor” to U.S. troops, helping them to negotiate the complex Afghan culture as they patrolled Taliban-infested regions.

On Nov. 4, while patrolling the village of Chehel Gazi, an Afghan man, Abdul Salam, threw gasoline on her and set her ablaze. Her bodyguard, Don M. Ayala, working for BAE Systems based in Rockville, Md., later shot and killed the man.

Ayala was later charged in U.S. courts with killing Salam while the Afghan was in custody. On Feb. 3—the same day as the memorial service for Loyd at USAID—he pleaded guilty to manslaughter across the Potomac River in Alexandria federal court.

Loyd was burned over 60 percent of her body and taken to Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, where she died Jan. 7.

Patricia Ward, Loyd’s mother, told the memorial gathering that her daughter had “found the Afghan people to be elegant, generous, and hospitable.”

“She made a list in case something happened, and after she died, I pulled it out. Instead of tears, I’m reading away. We found we have to get up because she’s left us so much work to do.”

Loyd’s note said: “Mom—I want you to go to Afghanistan” and it listed specific people she should meet and where to stay in



Paula Loyd

Photo is courtesy of Patricia Ward

Afghanistan, Ward said. “I’d like to do what she said, but we are not as clever or smart or educated as she was,” Ward added.

Loyd asked her parents to continue her work—to set up a foundation to educate Afghan girls, especially in the south where restrictive customs leave them without rights or schooling.

Khalil Rahat from Zabul Province, Afghanistan, said he met Loyd when he was working as an interpreter during the parliamentary election in 2005. “Paula did so much for the people of Zabul,” he said, resolving a conflict after staying with two rival tribes for almost a week in the desert along with the provincial governor and provincial tribal leaders.

“I will never forget her,” he said. “She was so kind to all Afghanistan people and we love her as our sister. I want Paula’s mother to know that your daughter was a brave lady and we will never be able to have a lady like her again.” ★ – B.B.

Rice Farmers Improve Yield in Nigeria

By Jennifer List

Margaret Tyoakaa used to squeeze out a meager living by selling drinks in a rural village in north-central Nigeria. After working long hours, she would make just enough money to cover her expenses, leaving her exhausted and hungry. Tyoakaa knew then she needed to make a career change, and that is when she decided to try her hand at rice farming.

“Last year, when my mother joined the Olam rice farming program, I decided to help her,” she said. “I saw her success, and this

year decided to enroll on my own [as a farmer-in-training].”

Tyoakaa lives in Nigeria’s breadbasket—Benue State—a place where agriculture, and especially rice farming, is enjoying a resurgence.

With its arable land and tropical climate, the country is an ideal locale for growing the staple. But the business side of production was less than ideal until 2005 when USAID’s mission in Nigeria began to work with the private sector to help reinvigorate the agricultural industry.

Nigerians eat 5.4 million metric tons of rice worth \$4 billion

annually. Approximately 3.1 million metric tons of that is imported, making Nigeria the largest net importer of rice on the African continent and the second largest importer in the world.

Would-be farmers in Nigeria were deterred from rice farming because it seemed too hard a lifestyle for little gain. Farmers didn’t have access to high-quality seeds and fertilizers. And, even if they did, they couldn’t get a loan to buy these goods. Plus, getting the rice to market proved to be a major challenge. Not only do few Nigerian farmers own vehicles to transport

their goods, but once the crops were brought to market, it was difficult to determine which buyers would pay a fair price.

USAID and Olam International Nigeria, which specializes in supply management for agricultural products, have worked together to boost efficiency and earning potential of rice farmers.

The alliance is providing farmers with tools to help them succeed, from seed cultivation and plantings to

see **NIGERIA** on page 15 ▶



Photo by Jennifer List, DAI

With the help of a USAID rice farming program in Nigeria, Patricia Alegba has improved crop yields and now earns enough to send all her children to school.

THE REGIONS

ASIA

As Businesses Multiply, Vietnam Becomes Trading Player

By Richard Nyberg

HANOI—Vietnam's exports to the United States increased 1,229 percent from 2001 to 2008, according to the U.S. International Trade Commission, and two years ago, the country gained full membership in the World Trade Organization, following 10 years of negotiations.

The southeast Asian nation has emerged as one of America's stalwart trading partners, more than three decades after the long war with the United States and its financial assistance from the former Soviet Bloc ended.

Now in its fourth year, the Vietnam Provincial Competitiveness Index (PCI) is making friendly business competition work for the country as it strives to maintain an economic growth rate of nearly 7

percent and fights poverty by creating new jobs.

The PCI, developed by USAID and the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI), measures the economic governance of each province based on its private-sector business development, and ranks them against each other. The idea is that competition drives each province to improve economically.

The opinions of more than 7,820 Vietnamese entrepreneurs and managers of small and medium enterprises across 64 provinces helped create the rankings. The friendly rivalry it has produced is one of the economic success stories of the year in a country increasingly attuned to global economic integration.

In 2008, Danang province

edged out Binh Duong province, the defending leader, to take the top ranking.

Spurred on by the attention the PCI brings—the news has been featured on numerous front pages of the country's national press—Vietnam's business leaders are taking action. The state-owned daily, *Vietnam News*, reported that Hanoi is “stinging” from its 31st place ranking and plans to climb 10 slots by next year. Entrepreneurs in the capital reported an increase in time spent on regulatory compliance and a decrease in “proactivity of local leadership” and labor training.

This “pioneering work in Vietnam on aspects of economic governance and competitiveness is relevant—and worthy of emulation in other parts of the



At the Leather and Shoe Research Institute in Hanoi, designers like Cap Thi Hang learn how to improve their product lines and gain an edge over their competitors in other parts of the country.

Photo by Richard Nyberg, USAID

world,” said David Brunell, USAID economic growth program manager.

The report notes that waiting periods to register a business are at an all-time low and that more respondents in provinces have received formal Land Use Rights Certificates. Provincial legal

gazettes—many of them now online—are making it easier for businesses to access the information they need.

The number of business disputes resolved through Provincial Economic Courts has

see VIETNAM on page 14 ▶

MIDDLE EAST

Dormitories Keep Moroccan Girls in School

RABAT, Morocco—In Morocco, 20 percent of girls aged 11 to 14 do not attend school. In rural areas, 27 percent are out of school.

Many girls dropped out because they must travel so far from home to school.

Dormitories were seen as a solution to keep girls in school

In 2005, USAID's mission in Morocco worked with government officials to build four dormitories for 83 girls; by 2006, 14 dormitories housed 800 girls. In

2007, with the support of the *Entraide Nationale*, the main government partner, the quality dormitories program included more than 100 dormitories, reaching over 6,400 girls in 12 of Morocco's 16 regions.

By 2008, the project had revamped a total of 198 dorms with over 16,688 girls.

What exactly is a quality dormitory?

Most dorm rooms fit from six to 20 bunk beds. The newest

dormitories are divided into cubicles with four bunks per section, in accordance with a new law limiting the number of people that can sleep in one room. The rooms have the usual accommodations of home away from home—warm blankets and lockers, closets and/or trunks beside each bed.

The dormitories also serve as social centers for the girls. Working through local associations and schools, quality dorms now provide support to ensure that rural girls are not simply lodged and nourished, but that they receive academic and psychosocial support to help them develop personally and succeed in their studies.

Different dorms have different support structures, but they all have adult supervision. Teams of women work in the kitchen, adults supervise homework sessions, and adults work in the dining halls and administration, as well as performing cleaning.

The “quality” model helps



Girls in their quality dormitory in Morocco.

Photo by Karima Rhanem, USAID

see MOROCCO on page 14 ▶

LATIN AMERICA

Jobs Project Trains Brazilians with HIV/AIDS

By Rodrigo Dalcin

BRASILIA—Discouraged by four years fighting her HIV/AIDS—as well as her low level of education and limited work experience—Eliana Santa Anna Silva hesitated to look for a job.

“I didn't even have the courage to start searching for a job,” she said.

She was tired of depending on government allowances to sustain her son and husband, also HIV positive.

With over 600,000 people living with HIV/AIDS, Brazil struggles to reduce the discrimination that affects many of them and denies them access to the job market. USAID's mission in Brazil has combated this issue since 2007 through PACT, an international NGO.

Silva is part of the first group of beneficiaries to improve professional skills and employability through this

program. At Arco-Iris, an HIV/AIDS NGO in Brasília, Silva and nine others have been trained in food service and hospitality. Most have already found jobs at events and restaurants.

“This workshop has made a big difference for me in terms of opening doors to the job market,” said Silva.

Sandra Barros, another beneficiary, continued improving her professional skills after completing the course. She is now enrolled in a two-month class, training to be a server in the restaurant sector. “I see this as an opportunity to find a regular job in the future and stop my diagnosis from limiting me,” she said.

According to Arco-Iris Vice President Antonio Lisboa, the USAID program fulfills a long-standing need for professional qualifications and income generation for people living with HIV or AIDS.

AFRICA

Kenya, Tanzania Projects Seek Property and Inheritance Rights for Women

A woman in rural Africa who loses her husband to HIV/AIDS often becomes the victim of local laws and traditions that prevent her from inheriting the family house and farm. This scenario is repeated every day in countries where women's rights to land and property are not recognized. As for intervention, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to promoting women's property and inheritance rights.

That fact came out of a 2008 study of local groups in Kenya and Tanzania that received grants from USAID's Office of Women in Development (WID). Those that use several approaches to help women hold on to their property were most effective, the study found.

WID awarded 20 small grants in 2001 to groups in Africa and Asia that help women gain property and inheritance rights—a

difficult prospect in many cultures where men dominate political, legal, and family life.

When the Land Team from USAID's Office of Natural Resources Management recently began looking for successful ways to integrate gender into its work on land tenure and property rights, it revisited past WID projects to identify lasting impacts and lessons for future programs.

A field team interviewed current and former staff, paralegals, lawyers, judges, magistrates, clients, and other beneficiaries; and reviewed reports, manuals, and other products of the grantees.

The clear recommendation was to use multiple avenues to help women gain the status of property holders.

For example, community paralegals trained by one grantee in Kenya—Education Center for

Women in Democracy—initially confronted resistance from local authorities when they tried to raise local awareness on property rights and assist women to claim their rights. Once the center began training local chiefs, however, paralegals and their clients found chiefs more supportive. Some chiefs even allied themselves with paralegals to help women.

The Education Center and another grantee, Envirocare, used radio shows to reach wider audiences and enhance their projects to raise awareness and train people.

The Education Center was notably strong in training community paralegals to resolve women's property disputes in their favor through local measures. But the group encountered difficult cases and referred them to the national chapter of the International Federation of Women Lawyers,

which provides legal aid to women and represents them in formal courts. In turn, the International Federation relied on the International Commission of Jurists' program to educate judges who would preside over such cases. The two organizations collaborated in drafting and advocating for proposed legislation to strengthen women's property and inheritance rights.

The study highlighted challenges that women face in accessing formal court systems, including high costs, long distances, case backlogs, corrupt judges, and bad lawyers. Local dispute resolution institutions are often more accessible to women, but can be affected by the bias against women's property rights in rural communities.

Study participants stressed the need for approaches to target more men and local authorities—including those making decisions based on customary law—if attitudes and local decision-making on women's property rights are to truly change. ★



A Rwandan farmer tills her newly-registered land. USAID awarded 20 small grants in 2001 to groups in Africa and Asia to help women gain property and inheritance rights.

Photo by Deborah Espinosa, Rural Development Institute

EUROPE & EURASIA

Transnistria's Economic Growth Transcends Politics

By Emily Patterson

TRANSNISTRIA REGION, Moldova—This sliver of land on Moldova's eastern border with Ukraine declared its independence in 1990 but is a virtual no man's land with Soviet-era infrastructure and no foreign investment, no internationally-recognized government to formally accept foreign assistance, and no international banking system.

However, USAID is bringing expertise into Transnistria to

help enterprising souls run businesses to contribute to the local economy.

Anatoly Dzeriovich, president of a formerly state-owned apparel company in Transnistria, is one such individual.

Intercentre Lux, which employs 600 people, faces steadily rising labor costs and high employee turnover. Most of Dzeriovich's business comes from sewing garments for U.S. or European designers like

Calvin Klein, Polaris, and Fuchs & Schmitt.

The company competes with apparel factories in China where labor is both cheap and skilled. As is true throughout the apparel industry, in order to retain existing clients and attract new business, the factory needed to increase productivity and efficiency.

After hearing about a

see **TRANSNISTRIA** on page 15 ▶



Arco-Iris beneficiaries work during their food service and hospitality course graduation ceremony. Most of the participants have already found jobs at events and restaurants.

Photo by Dailiani Seixas, USAID/Brazil

"These people have never had an opportunity to improve their job skills, mainly due to their HIV/AIDS diagnosis. For them, having the chance to work again also means an improvement in many other dimensions of their lives, such as their health, education levels, civic participation, and social life."

To bolster job placement of graduated trainees, the program also plans to develop databases of job opportunities in the com-

munity and establish a professional center with comprehensive job-related programs.

Apart from the job training and placement, the program improves quality of life by recognizing the need for a holistic approach to health and well-being of people living with HIV/AIDS. The strategy includes physical activity courses, psychosocial support groups on living successfully with AIDS, and proper nutrition education. ★



Improved wages provide incentive for workers in Transnistria to stay at home instead of migrating to jobs abroad.

Photo by Chad Ford, Chemionics International

FOCUS ON GUATEMALA



Photo by Robert Goodier, Rainforest Alliance

Calixto López holds up a seedling with its protective sleeve at the Finca Buenos Aires where he is the farm manager.



Photo by Axel Gómez, Rainforest Alliance

Loggers in a protected forest with their day's work in San Lucas Tolimán, Sololá.

Guatemala Preserves Its Teeming Natural Resources

By Wende Duflon



Photo by Robert Goodier, Rainforest Alliance

Lizard in silhouette against a tropical elephant ear plant.

Guatemala is among the world's top 25 biodiversity "hot spots" with one of the planet's richest regions, although highly threatened by degradation and deforestation. Yet many of its unique ecosystems are adequately managed and provide sustained flow of resources essential to economic growth.

The country contains the largest area of cloud forest and wetlands and the highest population of large cats in Central America. As an important point of convergence of species migrating from both North and South America, Guatemala plays a vital role in the conservation of many migratory bird species from the United States.

Rich biodiversity, cultural diversity, and a historic past easily make Guatemala one of the world's top tourism destinations. Investment and growth in natural-resource sectors need to be managed carefully to conserve their environmental and economic value.

USAID supports environmentally sound management of natural resources in areas of high biodiversity, including the Maya Biosphere Reserve in the Petén, the Motagua-

Polochic system (which includes the Sierra de las Minas Biosphere Reserve), and the Atitlán Volcanoes Bioregion. The program helps create eco-friendly jobs for people living in and around protected areas such as certified timber production and tourism.

In the Maya Biosphere Reserve, Sierra Lacandón Park staff was trained in fire management, fire breaks—gaps in vegetation to slow the spread of fire—were implemented, and patrols were conducted. In the Sierra de las Minas Biosphere Reserve, 11 municipalities signed agreements that included a salary for one park guard per municipality. In the Atitlán Bioregion, work focused on park management and tourism. The municipality of San Pedro has constructed trails, a visitor center, and a geology museum.

USAID's partners are protecting nesting sites of the endangered scarlet macaw and monitoring frogs, horned guan, and bees as well as tropical plants known as bromeliads. Manatees also appear to be holding steady.

Also, with USAID assistance, Guatemala has become a world leader in certified community-

managed forests, with over 400,000 hectares of community forest certified in 2005.

To deal with climate change, USAID is working in Guatemala to improve protected area management, preserve carbon stocks, and help Guatemalans reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Furthermore, in the Petén region around the Maya Biosphere Reserve, USAID supports mass popular education to encourage the use of family planning and better environmental land management through a radio soap opera "At a Crossroads."

A second popular program is the "Mobile Biosphere," a cross-terrain vehicle that travels to remote communities across the Maya Biosphere Reserve to organize informal education activities including talks, mini-workshops, skits, movies, and games.

Educational themes include natural pesticides and organic fertilizers, crop diversification, family planning and reproductive health, forest fire prevention, environmental sanitation (trash collection and disposal, latrines, drinking water), education, improved nutrition, and medicinal plants. ★

FOCUS ON GUATEMALA



Photo by Robert Goodier, Rainforest Alliance

A man at Finca Fahsen demonstrates how an organic coffee farm reuses plastic beverage bottles that are painted red and filled with honey sugar water to fend off insects rather than use insecticides.



Photo by Axel Gomez, Rainforest Alliance

Two Mayan men display their handmade and packaged preserves sold under the brand name, La Nueva Era.



Photo by Robert Goodier, Rainforest Alliance

Beetle in the tropics.

In 2006, the United States and Guatemala signed agreements to reduce Guatemala's debt to the United States by \$24 million and to instead use the funds to conserve tropical forests in Guatemala. The agreements, made possible through the Tropical Forests Conservation Act of 1998 (TFCA), represented the United States' largest debt swap in the history of the Act.



Photo by Robert Goodier, Rainforest Alliance

Caterpillar in a tropical rainforest.



Photo by Robert Goodier, Rainforest Alliance

A view of the Agua volcano just after sunset with the Acatenango and Fuego volcanoes in the distance, taken on descent from the Pacaya active volcano.

Thomas Corts Dies, Led Basic Education Initiatives

Thomas Corts, the U.S. government's former basic education coordinator, died suddenly Feb. 4 in Birmingham, Ala. He was 67.



Photo by Patricia Adams, USAID

He was appointed to the position, which was formally part of the State Department's Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance, by President George W. Bush in October 2007. Corts served concurrently as the coordinator of the Initiative to Expand Education, a USAID effort to improve basic education in Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, Liberia, Mali, and Yemen—countries that have demonstrated a strong commitment to educational improvement.

During his tenure, Corts worked with several U.S.

government agencies, the White House, the U.S. Congress, the private sector, and leading education experts to research and develop a U.S. strategy for basic education. He traveled extensively, visiting USAID activities in Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America.

"Dr. Corts is remembered for his keen intellect, devotion to development in the field of education, and his unfailing kind and considerate manner," said Joseph Carney, director of the Office of Education in the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade. Corts left his position as coordinator in January.

Corts was born in 1941 in Terre Haute, Ind., graduated from Georgetown College in Kentucky, and held master's and doctoral degrees from Indiana University.

He was named president of Wingate University in North Carolina in 1974 and served

there for nine years until he was elected president of Samford University in Birmingham. Corts led Samford for 23 years until his retirement in 2006.

Afterwards, he served briefly as interim chancellor of Alabama's two-year college system. Corts also served as president of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and the American Association of Presidents of Independent Colleges and Universities.

Corts is survived by his wife of 44 years, Marla, two daughters, a son, and six grandchildren. Memorial services to honor Corts were held on Feb. 8 at Samford University and Feb. 20 at USAID's Washington headquarters.

In lieu of flowers, the family has suggested that memorial gifts be sent to the Corts Scholarship Fund, Samford University, 800 Lakeshore Dr., Birmingham, Ala. 35229, or to Eddie Gibson International Ministries, P.O. Box 610188, Birmingham, Ala. 35261. ★

Our Team in Brussels: USAID European Offices Work with Donors

By John Waggoner

The typical USAID officer is occasionally found in remote and inhospitable regions of the earth, sometimes wearing sunglasses, a floppy hat, and boots. However, some USAID officers are assigned to sophisticated world capitals and wear shined shoes, pressed skirts, neckties, and suits.

A case in point is the USAID office in Brussels where three Agency officials deal with fellow donor countries. The staff includes Jonathan Addleton, counselor for international development and USAID representative to the European Union (EU); Marguerite Davis, his special assistant; and Patterson Brown, senior advisor on food and humanitarian issues.

The Brussels office is one branch in an expanding network of liaison positions in major world capitals such as Paris, Geneva, Tokyo, and Beijing. In addition, the Africa Bureau maintains a liaison office in Addis Ababa with the African Union; the Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance Bureau oversees a

liaison office in Rome with the U.N. food agencies; and the Bureau for Europe and Eurasia recently posted a development counselor in Sofia, Bulgaria, a former aid recipient that is itself now an aid donor.

In addition, to strengthen civil-military coordination, USAID now posts liaison officers at four U.S. military commands: the European Command (EUCOM) and Africa Command (AFRICOM) in Stuttgart, Germany; Pacific Command (PACOM) in Honolulu; and Central Command (CENTCOM) in Tampa.

The main rationale for a USAID office in Brussels is to strengthen both dialogue and coordination between the United States and Europe on development and humanitarian policies and programs around the world.

Of \$100 billion in annual worldwide Official Development Assistance (ODA)—aid given directly by governments to programs in developing countries—Europe collectively provides \$60 billion. About one-fifth is channeled directly through the Euro-

pean Commission (EC) and the remainder provided on a bilateral basis by the 27 member states.

The U.S. ODA contribution is \$22 billion per year. Together, at least four out of every five aid dollars are provided by either the EU or the United States. Better coordination can help stretch scarce ODA further, especially during this period of global financial crisis.

EU development assistance is important because of its size but also because of the important political signal that is sent when the world's largest economic grouping commits itself to supporting a particular country or region.

Further, said Addleton in a report reviewing his Brussels office, dialogue on development cooperation represents a positive aspect of the U.S.-EU relationship, one that can strengthen trans-Atlantic ties.

The Brussels office inevitably finds itself dealing with a range of stereotypes in its own right.

Addleton reports that there is a general—and mistaken—assumption among European aid

DECEMBER 21, 2008 – JANUARY 17, 2009

PROMOTED

Caroline N. Abla
Public Health Advisor

Christopher S. Bodle
Security Specialist

Patricia E. Bradley
Contract Specialist

Andrea M. David
Accountant

Sonya M. Heller Irey
Supervisory Program Analyst

Bonita A. Jones
Administrative Operations Specialist

Amitabh Khardori III
Attorney Advisor General

Deanna G. Radwan
Contract Specialist

Vann D. Rolfson
Supervisory Contract Specialist

REASSIGNED

Christopher W. Abrams
COMP/NE/OJT to Haiti/JOPA

Dana M. Alzouma
DCHA/PVCASHA/PDM to M/OAA/T

Richard T. Andrews
COMP/FSLT to Guatemala/PDS

Kimberlee A. Bell
COMP/NE/OJT to West Bank/Gaza

Amber B. Brooks
AA/DCHA to E&E/DGST

Elizabeth A. Callender
COMP/NE/OJT to India/PS

John B. Carihfield
Iraq/PRT to O/S LANG TRNG

Melissa M. Francis
O/S LANG TRNG to El Salvador/SDO

Ramses Gauthier

Iraq/OFM to COMP/FSLT

James Gultry

COMP/FSLT to Madagascar/CONT

Melinda R. Lucke

COMP/DETAIL/SUP to Pakistan/PDO

David E. McCloud

ME/MEA to COMP/FS

Monique A. Murad

COMP/NE/OJT to Ecuador/GD

Mike E. Sarhan

USAID REP/Yemen to COMP/FS

Ken A. Seifert

ME/MEA to AA/LAC

Padmaja Shetty

COMP/NE/OJT to Philippines/JOPA

Aliou Tall

COMP/NE/OJT to DROC

Sara M. Werth

COMP/NE/OJT to Colombia

Jorge E. Velasco

O/S LANG TRNG to Haiti/PHN

RETIRED

Barney P. Popkin

Ronald Ruybal

Stephen R. Tupper

MOVED ON

Peter J. Halpert

Victor Han

Jean Poe

Paul M. Vaclavik

experts and officials that USAID, as well as the U.S. government more broadly, never provides budget support. There is also a strong perception that U.S. assistance is channeled exclusively through U.S. companies and NGOs. More than a few counterparts believe that the Global Development Alliance is limited to American companies and some view it as a stalking horse for advancing U.S. commercial interests.

A perception of U.S. "stinginess" when it comes to foreign assistance persists, said Addleton's report.

This can partially be traced to the strong emphasis in Brussels on the public sector, with most measures of foreign assistance focused on official aid as a percentage of

gross national product. Official U.S. assistance may be a smaller percentage of gross domestic product, but adds up to larger sums than all other donor countries. In addition, much U.S. non-official aid flows from churches, charities, and foundations.

Finally, it is not widely understood that U.S. government development assistance has more than doubled since 9/11—and more than tripled in the case of Africa.

The Brussels office fosters dialogue and cooperation with other development agencies and reflects changes in the way development programs today are planned, shaped, and delivered. It also links the issues of developing countries to a much larger set of political and security concerns. ★

CHOLERA from page 4

health workers to prevent its ferocious spread have caused alarm across the globe. The disease is rampant because drinking water has been contaminated by broken water pipes and open sewage, further spread by lack of rainwater drainage. Many people dig shallow wells in their yards to obtain water but lack the chemicals to purify it, while others must use water from contaminated community water points.

In addition to financial assistance, USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance dispatched a Disaster Assistance Response Team to Harare to coordinate U.S. emergency assistance and to provide technical expertise to help combat the outbreak.

The Agency also provided 10 million water treatment tablets, 30,000 water containers, and 30,000 buckets in addition to 440,000 bars of soap to the U.N. Children's Fund for distribution as part of hygiene education programs. Proper hygiene—including basic hand washing—is a first step in preventing spread of the disease.

Since October 2007, the U.S. government has provided more than \$260 million in humanitarian assistance for Zimbabwe's complex emergency, including the health and food crises. Cholera has only added to those problems.

"This outbreak did not happen overnight," said Dirk Djikerman, USAID's Acting Assistant Administrator for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance. "Zimbabwe's health care system and infrastructure have severely deteriorated over the years. Poorly maintained water and sanitation systems, coupled with increasingly inaccessible health and other services, have caused the cholera outbreak and high case fatality rate in Zimbabwe."

Zimbabwe has been in free-fall for years, with food shortages and the collapse of health care, education, and basic municipal services like water. The country is experiencing astronomical hyperinflation, most recently estimated to be over a quadrillion percent; last year's election and run-off led to violence; and the political parties of President Robert Mugabe's government and newly sworn-in Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai are still negotiating the implementation of a power-sharing arrangement. ★

National Neonatology Forum of India Honors USAID Child Specialist

NEW DELHI—The National Neonatology Forum of India (NNF) awarded an honorary fellowship to child specialist and pediatrician Dr. Rajiv Tandon Dec. 12, 2008.

Dr. Tandon, chief of Maternal and Child Health, Nutrition and Urban Health Division at USAID's mission in India, received the award for his contributions in developing India's National Child Health Policy. Dr. Tandon has helped to ensure an increased focus on newborn care in the policy. India's infant mortality rate is among the highest in the world, with newborn deaths accounting for a significant portion.

NNF is a professional body of approximately 5,000 members, which focuses its work on



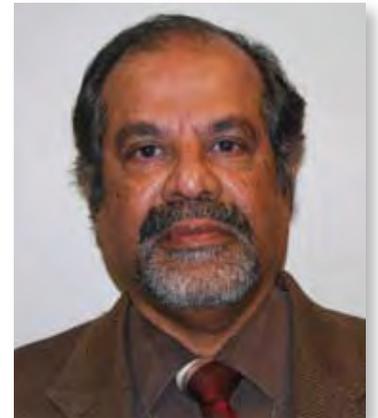
newborn health and has 18 state chapters across the country. The fellowship was presented to Dr. Tandon by Dr. Surjya Kant Mishra, the country's Minister of Health and Family Welfare, and Asim Dasgupta, West Bengal's Minister of Finance, at NNF's 28th annual convention in Kolkata. ★

USAID Energy Advisor Receives Award for Work in India

NEW DELHI—S. Padmanaban, a senior energy advisor with USAID, received the Energy Professional Development Award Dec. 14, 2008, for his contributions to the field of energy efficiency in India.

Padmanaban, director of USAID's South Asia Regional Initiative's energy program, was nominated for the award by the Association of Energy Engineers, India chapter. He received the award at a ceremony commemorating the National Energy Conservation Day at Kolkata.

The Association of Energy Engineers is a nonprofit professional society headquartered in Atlanta, Ga., with the goal of promoting "the scientific and educational interests of those



engaged in the energy industry and to foster action for sustainable development." The association's awards are presented to energy professionals who have achieved international, regional or national prominence in their fields. ★

ACVFA Releases Report on Public Outreach

USAID and its partners in the development community must use effective media and other communications tools to overcome public ignorance and ambivalence regarding U.S. foreign assistance, says a recent report by aid experts.

Lack of knowledge about U.S. foreign aid is an obstacle to advancing development around the world, said the report from the Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACVFA).

Public opinion polling shows that Americans have scant knowledge of U.S. foreign assistance. Typically, they vastly overestimate its budget, which affects whether or not Americans want to increase or decrease aid.

Moreover, unless the word is spread about the results achieved by many U.S. aid programs, public support is likely to remain weak and ambivalent.

Polling and focus groups reveal that recipient country citizens also have distorted views of U.S. foreign

assistance. For example, only 40 percent of Egyptians knew their country received foreign assistance from the United States, and just 10 percent to 20 percent were aware of specific programs for health, education, and business. The result of this ignorance is a falsified image of the United States and lingering resentment on the part of recipient-country audiences that their own countries are being neglected.

ACVFA, an advisory body appointed by the USAID administrator to provide information on aid policy and link the government to NGOs, produced the report on public perception of foreign aid to suggest how USAID might better "tell its story" to domestic and foreign audiences.

The report, "From the American People: Why the Story That U.S. Foreign Assistance Is Working Must Be Told," concludes with 10 recommendations. Among them: USAID should increase its commitment to public outreach

through increased resources, including the hiring of professional communication specialists.

"Aid does not magically communicate itself," said the report, which was published in November 2008.

The report also recommends that informing domestic audiences be a central part of communications outreach. The communications effort should have consistent budgetary and institutional support, the report says.

For international audiences, the report praises USAID's

"Branding" initiative as well as its Development Outreach Communication program that has placed more than 100 full- and part-time communications professionals in the field. The report recommends expansion of overseas media campaigns that have worked well in Lebanon, the West Bank, Indonesia, and other places.

"Aid does not magically communicate itself," said the report, which was published in November 2008.

The report coincides with increased discussion of the "smart power" aspects of American foreign policy, and a growing governmental awareness of the importance of foreign assistance to U.S. national security. The report also comes at a time of bipartisan congressional backing for increased foreign aid budgets. In addition, the Obama Administration has repeatedly called for an ambitious development agenda.

Read the report at http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/acvfa/pub_outreach_final.pdf. ★
—J.W.

Voter Education Helps Iraqis to Participate in Provincial Elections

By Renuka Naj

BAGHDAD—In the weeks before the Jan. 31 provincial elections, hundreds of thousands of people attended grassroots voter education workshops on how the election process works and how to make votes count.

More than 14,000 candidates vied for 440 seats on provincial councils in 14 of Iraq's 18 governorates. The autonomous Kurdish region and oil-rich Kirkuk will

hold elections at a later date that has not yet been set.

Unlike previous elections that were accompanied by boycotting or violence, this election involved participation from all ethnic groups without any noticeable violence.

Instead of violence, the biggest obstacle that voters faced was an overwhelming number of political parties, coalitions, and

candidates—all with their own goals and positions.

Kent Larson, USAID director of the Office of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), said that “for the first time Iraqis have had a chance to vote for individuals and not just for parties.”

“The Iraqis saw the need to educate the voters on the election process and mobilized communities to generate information on how to vote. This was an excellent example of how Iraqis are leading and helping other Iraqis.”

Alongside the United Nations and other international donors, USAID is providing technical assistance to the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) through a six-year, \$102 million elections support program implemented by the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES).

As polling day neared, voters enrolled in workshops led by 170 civil society groups and NGOs trained through USAID's Iraq Rapid Assistance Program. The local organizations worked with PRTs to oversee the voter education efforts.

Election workers used television, newspapers, posters, and billboards to reach out to Iraqis, and provided sample ballots and a list of candidates' names to help voters make informed decisions.

Voter outreach took place in



An elderly man checks the voter list for his name at a polling station in Buhriz, Diyala province.

some of Iraq's most dangerous areas such as Diyala, Iskandariya, and Sadr City. Local civil society groups, staffed by individuals familiar with the communities, held workshops in conference rooms, tents, classrooms, soccer fields, and community centers.

Four million Iraqis received information from media efforts while 300,000 Iraqis attended workshops led by civil society groups and NGOs, according to USAID contractor Development Alternatives, Inc.

The United Nations and the U.S. State Department also provided grants to civil society organizations to promote voter awareness.

Miles Toder, USAID advisor for the Office of Democracy and Governance, said, “We are delighted to have played

a supporting role in which the government of Iraq, its Council of Representatives, and the IHEC took the lead, managed the process of passing the legislation, and administered the elections for governorate councils.”

“Now we look forward to assisting the new councils and the government as they execute an ambitious new legal framework, devolve more powers to the provinces and, for the first time ever, elect local councils later this year.”

Since 2003, USAID has spent more than \$6 billion on programs designed to stabilize communities; foster economic and agricultural growth; and build the capacity of the national, local, and provincial governments to respond to the needs of the Iraqi people. ★

Staal, Raised in Basrah, Returns to Iraq as Election Monitor

Decades after Tom Staal spent his childhood in Basrah, Iraq, he returned as a USAID election monitor in February to observe peaceful, provincial elections that saw the rise of secular parties committed to building a new, more democratic Iraq.

Staal also served in 2003 and 2004 as head of the USAID office in Basrah, based at the British-run airport outside of the city.

“This time I visited areas I could not visit in 2003,” said Staal, noting that violence has been greatly reduced. He was able to monitor elections in a Shiite stronghold and Basrah Kadima, a warren of tiny, ancient streets.

“The voting was normal—well managed and kind of like voting here in America,” he said. “Security was good. They shut down the country to traffic.”

Only official cars were allowed on streets and most shops closed for the day as people walked to vote in schools and government offices.

The Iraqi army created a security perimeter 50 to 100 yards around the schools, searching all who entered. Inside, Iraqi police had a second perimeter, and inside that was a third perimeter run by the Iraqi Election Commission.

Each polling station had a list of the roughly 3,000 registered voters for the district. If names were not on the list, one could produce identity cards and still vote.

Representatives of some of the political parties were allowed

inside the station to observe that voting was free and fair. Afterwards, voters dipped a finger into purple dye to prevent re-voting.

Staal noted that thousands of election posters were on the walls as he drove around the city as an official election monitor and that the election process itself maintained high standards. An Iranian consul was unable to drive around and observe the election because he neglected to arrange for it in advance as the election rules mandated.

“The results are that the leading party lost in all areas of the country—it shows people want change,” said Staal. “And secular parties won over sectarians. Pro-Iran parties did not do well.”

The Dawa party of Prime Minister Nouri al-Malaki—seen as pro-American—did well, capturing nine of the 14 provinces voting. A lot of tribal candidates won in the mainly Sunni Anbar Province. In most cases, no party won a majority and coalitions will be formed to govern.

The provincial councils will appoint the governors but power over the budget, taxes, and even the police remains with the central government's ministries and their provincial representatives—at least for now.

USAID, noted Staal, assisted the elections with training and other help. The Agency also helped the provinces lobby for the law that created the new, decentralized system of provincial councils. ★ – B.B.



Members of the 2008 class of USAID Presidential Management Fellows (PMF), Dec. 16, 2008. The PMF program recruits recent, advanced degree graduates from various disciplines through a competitive nomination and exam process. Fellows selected demonstrate a commitment to leadership and management of public policies and programs. The more than 30 members of the 2008 class have experience with the U.S. government, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. Pictured from left to right, back row: Nancy Combs, Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA); Susanna Baker, Europe and Eurasia Bureau; Christopher Ward, Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade Bureau (EGAT); E. Brennan Dorn, Latin America and the Caribbean Bureau; Maurice Kent, OAA; Ashley Peterson Allen, EGAT; front row: Sarah Sandison, Global Health Bureau (GH); Dany Khy, EGAT; Cyndy Pelt, Foreign Assistance Bureau; Andrea Halverson, GH; Natasha Greenberg, EGAT. For more information about the PMF program, go to www.pmf.opm.gov.

Your Voice

By John Waggoner

Your Voice, a continuing **FRONTLINES** feature, offers personal observations from USAID employees. John Waggoner is a speech writer in the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs.

I Remember the Old American University of Cairo

It was bittersweet to learn that the American University in Cairo (AUC), where I taught for five years, is moving from bustling downtown Tahrir Square to a spectacular suburban campus in “New Cairo” formerly referred to as Khatemeya—a move USAID has supported.

When I taught there in the late 1990s, AUC shared Tahrir Square with the Arab League, a swank hotel, and the fabulous Egyptian Museums.

Surrounding the campus were street vendors, small stores, booksellers, and stalls where tea and *shishas*, or smoking water pipes, were readily available. Makeshift mosques and various offices occupied some very dilapidated buildings nearby. AUC at Tahrir drew strength and vitality from these surroundings and the life that pulsed around it.

But when you entered the campus gates, you found an oasis of sorts—peaceful and calm—free of the kaleidoscopic crowds, traffic, dust, and clamor just outside.

I would make my way to a cafeteria and—with coffee and newspaper in hand—find the shade of a gorgeous tree and settle in a chair by a fountain whose basin was an attractive mosaic and whose soothing sounds soon made you forget the horns and shouts that accompanied your commute to campus.

Here I would meet other faculty and students for hellos and conversation. Egyptian students are very respectful. Once beyond formalities, they can also be disarmingly natural and always friendly.

Approximately half the seats in my classroom were occupied by females. This was a rarity elsewhere in the Arab world. When USAID supports this school and such policies, it is spreading opportunity and unleashing transformative change in these societies.

I also had scholarship students in my class, thanks to USAID. These bright and hard-working students were a



counterpoint to the many cosseted students from around the Arab world who sat next to them and came from the most privileged levels of society.

I taught American politics to students who generally had a love/hate relationship with my country. When the United States lobbed missiles into Saddam’s Iraq, it sparked a campus-wide protest at AUC. I observed from the periphery, much as I did as a student during the university protests of my youth, when the Vietnam War was raging.

The AUC protest brought home to me the sensitivity of these Arab students to anything they perceived as violating Arab sovereign rights or honor. And it

brought home the power of a sense of outrage to unite otherwise passive students, who were typically more concerned with the upcoming weekend and the prospect of parties to come.

The outrage was uniformly shared, or so I thought, until a student approached me and whispered: “Don’t think we are like this, professor. I’m from Kuwait, and me and my family will always be grateful to the United States.”

I marveled that it was the “American University” here in Cairo that was host to this protest against *American* foreign policy. And I thought of AUC’s complex position in the complexities of this part of the world.

Later in my classroom, one of my students trembled as he lifted his shirt to expose contusions and welts on his arms and waist. He had boldly taken his protest to the streets of Cairo where he met the police and batons.

My instinct was, if this were my kid, to hold him in my arms. This was all part of my AUC experience and it could sometimes touch you very profoundly on a personal level. It demonstrates that good uni-

versities are places where teachers learn too.

Too often we in development are driven by short-term, results-driven programming. But sometimes the work my colleagues do is *incalculable*. And this may have the profoundest effects on the recipients of our aid. This is the case with our association with AUC. ★

American University in Cairo Opens New Campus

CAIRO—In a ceremony held Feb. 7, the American University in Cairo inaugurated its new campus in New Cairo, moving from its longtime home in downtown Tahrir Square.

Egypt’s First Lady Suzanne Mubarak and Margaret Scobey, U.S. Ambassador to Egypt, spoke at the event. The head of USAID’s Middle East Bureau, George Laudato, led an Agency delegation.

During her speech, the Ambassador said, “The new demands of our new world raise the importance of education. We need our future leaders to be diverse and to have a diverse educational experience...

Perhaps most importantly, we need leaders who are dedicated to developing a true respect for each other if we are going to effectively work together to harness these forces of change for the greater good.”

Over the past 20 years, USAID has provided some \$270 million to secure the school’s endowment, increase scholarship programs, expand libraries, and contribute to the construction of the new \$400 million campus.

The old campus had 9 acres of land; the new site has 260 acres. When it opened in 1919, the university had 142 students. Today, 90 years later, it has 1,500 faculty and staff, and more than 5,550 students, 1,000 of whom are from outside Egypt. ★

Brookings: A “Civilian Surge” in Iraq?

The need for a “civilian surge for Iraq” was the focus of a symposium at the Brookings Institution recently at which USAID and other experts voiced the need to create jobs and restore Iraq’s economy.

“Jobs, jobs, and jobs,” is the paramount priority said USAID’s Jeanne Pryor, deputy director of the Iraq Office.

Iraq’s rich resources, including oil and farmland, can be exploited to provide jobs once violence ends, she said, adding that Iraqis are “incredibly courageous,” educated and entrepreneurial. The panel agreed that Iraqis must take the lead in determining their own future.

The panel coincides with a major reassessment of U.S. Iraq policy, affected in part by elections in both countries that have trans-

formed the public debate. The new administration in Washington has pledged to draw down troops there, while the initial results of Iraq’s provincial elections has sparked a cautious optimism for a politically more united country and a more stable society.

Up until now, the debate has taken place largely in military terms. But civilian assistance programs will likely be key to Iraq’s long-term stabilization and democratic development.

At the Jan. 30 Brookings symposium, leading experts discussed “A Civilian Surge for Iraq.” Panelists included USAID’s Pryor, Ambassador Henry Clarke, a former head of the Office of Provincial Affairs; Brig. Gen. David Reist, USMC, who was involved in the pacification of Anbar province; Rabih

Torbay of the NGO International Medical Corps, and representatives of the U.N. High Commission for Refugees.

Reist cautioned against looking at Iraq through American biases and stereotypes instead of working with the tribal culture. Clarke stressed the importance of engaging local governments because the complexity of the country defies a “cookie cutter” approach and because of the need to deconstruct the centralized totalitarianism that was the legacy of former Iraq President Saddam Hussein.

Torbay pointed to the necessity of providing essential services and conducting a “needs assessment.” The insurgency had effectively short-circuited projects to provide water, sanitation, health, and food following decades of sanctions and war. He

said that any civilian surge must be a “smart surge” and that this was not merely “a question of bodies alone” but of building technical capacity within the Iraqi society.

Solving the refugee problem and accommodating the needs of approximately 2.5 million to 3 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) will be one of the ultimate tests. Currently, only about 10 percent of returned IDPs manage to earn a living. “A calibrated return of those living abroad” was also mentioned during the discussion. Worst case scenarios also have to be planned for, making sure that neighboring countries remain willing and able to absorb any new refugees should there be a relapse into violence and a further exodus of Iraqis. ★ – J.W.

NYE from page 1



Rep. Glenn Nye (D-Va.)

“I like the hands-on work of USAID field work—you see the results immediately,” he said. “I’d never trade the years in development, even in Iraq. Our program was part of the solution—improving things.”

He caught the development bug when his father, a cardiologist, took him to the Middle East with a Physicians for Peace

humanitarian project. He graduated from Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service in 1996, interned at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and joined the State Department’s Foreign Service in 1999.

Nye served as a consul and liaison to the Albanian communities in Macedonia and Kosovo during a violent period, once using his contacts to free a U.S. hostage from Albanian militia. But then he was sent to do economic work in peaceful Singapore where he “missed the edge of work in a conflict zone—I wanted to go where the real cutting edge of work was,” Nye said.

In 2002, he volunteered to go to Afghanistan with USAID and worked for a year for the Asia Foundation, which ran elections for delegates to the convention (*Loya Jirga*) that wrote the constitution, and Afghan presidential elections. He was fortunate that it was a time of relative peace and he was not bottled up in a secure compound.

“I lived in a house in Kabul that we rented from Afghans and I rode my bike to work at the Asia Foundation,” he said.

In the fall of 2004, he returned to Washington to organize absentee balloting for Iraqis in the United States for the International Organization for Migration and the International Federation for Electoral Systems, funded by USAID.

But the desire to return abroad surfaced and Nye next went to the Middle East as a project manager for USAID’s Office of

Transition Initiatives, working on community development across the West Bank and Gaza.

In 2007, Nye returned to Iraq as an advisor on the Community Stabilization Program, which created 70,000 jobs and provided grants to small businesses—all in the hope of keeping young men from joining the insurgents. He worked in Baghdad, Ramadi, Faluja, Mosul, Kirkuk, and Baquba. Keeping a low profile to avoid attracting the bad guys, the program also set up sports teams and vocational training.

To be sure he supports the interests of his constituents—many of them active or retired military personnel around Norfolk and Virginia Beach—he sits on the Armed Services Committee. This will enable him to be involved in military-civilian relations in aid programs as well as “talk about the best way to fight terror and insurgency,” he said.

President Barack Obama, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, and Defense Secretary Bob Gates all have spoken about “smart power” being more effective at times than military force alone, said Nye, who plans to bring his USAID development experience into that equation. ★ – B.B.

Ashtar Analeed Marcus contributed to this report.

CONGRESSMEN WHO SERVED IN USAID:

- ▶ In 1964, Maine Democratic Rep. Frank Morey Coffin served as deputy administrator following his term in Congress.
- ▶ In 1967, Colorado Democratic Rep. Roy McVicker served as a contract consultant to the Agency and North Dakota Democratic Rep. Rolland Redlin was the war on hunger consultant for USAID following their terms in Congress.
- ▶ From 1977 to 1981, former Democratic Reps. Sander Levin of Michigan and John Gilligan of Ohio served, consecutively, as the Agency’s administrators, Levin before his service in Congress and Gilligan afterwards.

Source: Senate Historian’s Office

RESPONSE from page 1

activated) is the reserve, which will be comprised of state, local, and private sector subject matter experts with special skills not generally found in the federal workforce.

“USAID is a vital part of this effort given its history of being operational and providing technical assistance in a range of sectors. The additional departments participating will add to the overall capacity of the U.S. government,” said Laura Hall, response strategy director in S/CRS.

Active component personnel will, when hired, be assigned to DCHA’s Office of Civilian Response but detailed to regional and technical bureaus for reconstruction and stabilization (R&S). Corps members may spend 60 percent of their time on R&S deployments of three to six months, or longer. The new hires will be mid-level Foreign Service and Civil Service officers. They will be based in Washington but will be trained and ready to deploy within 48 hours to crisis spots anywhere in the world.

When not deployed they will be expected to take eight weeks of USAID-specific, interagency R&S and civilian-military

training each year to enhance their readiness for stabilization and reconstruction missions.

Training will include joint exercises and experiments with the military. Similarly, standby members will be required to take four weeks of readiness training each year.

The Office of Civilian Response also oversees development of a civilian deployment center that will be co-located with USAID’s Continuation of Operations facility. The deployment center will serve as an equipment storage and pre-deployment readiness center for the Corps’s interagency personnel.

To date, Corps members have served in Afghanistan, Chad, Colombia, Haiti, Iraq, Kosovo, Lebanon, Nepal, Sudan, Yemen, and other countries, according to Larry Sampler, deputy coordinator at S/CRS, on detail from USAID.

So far, 72 USAID employees have volunteered and been accepted. Eventually 750 Agency staff are expected to join the standby team.

“I signed up to contribute to something when they were looking for volunteers and to do something interesting,” said

Rick Marshall of the Legislative and Public Affairs bureau. “It would be interesting to be in on the ground level if we go into a broken country that needs our help.”

In response to an article in *FrontLines*, a lot of USAID retirees volunteered to join the civilian force, said Kvitashvili, “and we are drafting an update to specifically inform retirees” how they can participate.

The Bush Administration requested \$260 million to set up the Corps. In fiscal year 2008, Congress appropriated \$25 million for USAID and \$50 million for State and other agencies. ★

AZERBAIJAN from page 4

maintain public confidence in the banking system.

USAID also worked with the government to make changes in the country’s business environment. Consequently, Azerbaijan’s Doing Business ranking, a World Bank measure of the ease of doing business in a country, improved by 64 places—from 97 to 33—between 2008 and 2009. This is the largest single improvement in the history of the Doing Business survey. ★

VIETNAM from page 6

nearly doubled, according to the report. It also shows that better-governed provinces are able to use their resources efficiently and to influence business performance and income.

“We strongly appreciate the reform efforts of other provinces, who acquired valuable experience and the motivation to further improve their investment environments,” said Chairman Vu Tien Loc of VCCI.

More than 40 provinces and state agencies have used the PCI to better understand competitive factors that drive economic growth. Investors use the index when considering new business ventures.

There are 300,000 domestic enterprises in Vietnam today. According to VCCI, the country would like that number to grow to 500,000 by 2010.

The biggest obstacles facing businesses in 2008 according to media reports: complicated administrative procedures, unskilled labor, and poor infrastructure.

The PCI is one of several economic and legal reform measures USAID has carried out with Vietnam since 2001 to quicken the country’s transition to a market-driven economy. ★

MOROCCO from page 6

girls to become more involved in shaping their own future, and more active in contributing to their community, according to education officials and families.

Bouabouâa Mouha, the father of a 13-year-old student, explains: “I feel secure that our daughter is safer in the dormitories, she receives help and becomes more responsible and independent. When Nezha comes back home, she even helps her brothers with what she has learned at the dorm and at school.”

The dormitories are having a positive impact on education. In rural areas, only 1.7 percent of the 840 girls participating in the quality dormitories program have dropped out, compared to the national rate of 16 percent. And 79.6 percent of the beneficiary girls passed their final exams, 30 percent more than the national average.

School directors and teachers say many of the girls have become leaders in the classroom and the school. And parents like Mouha have also noticed radical changes.

Entraide Nationale has fully adopted the quality girls’ dormitories model, which is being introduced into over 200 new dormitories for girls and for boys. The organization has assumed both administrative and financial responsibility for the program. In some regions, local authorities have committed to building and equipping dorms, and supporting the training of resident advisors. ★

OBAMA from page 1

Jakarta. Sutoro's former colleague and friend now works for the Academy for Educational Development, a USAID contractor.

Sutoro taught English for a development group supported by USAID—the Lembaga Pendidikan Pembinaan Manajemen—which still exists but no longer receives U.S. assistance, said Ikranagara.

Ikranagara and Sutoro bonded through the close friendships formed by their children. They remained close after the children grew up, while sharing the same passion for development.

"She was an earthy person and an anthropologist—at home in the villages. She had a wide variety of friends beside the expats," Ikranagara said.

Sutoro earned a Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Hawaii in 1992 but lived mainly in Indonesia from 1967 to 1994. Obama spent about four years in Jakarta before moving back to live with his grandparents in Hawaii.

Sutoro spoke Indonesian or *Bahasa* and worked with the Ford Foundation as a program officer for women's livelihoods, as well as for the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. She also worked with Bank Rakyat (People's Bank) in Indonesia, getting them to widen a small loans program for farmers into microloans. The Bank Rakyat program was one of USAID's most successful projects there.

Richard Patten, a friend and economist, said in a *Time* magazine article in April 2008 that Sutoro was largely responsible for the success of that program, which is now "No. 1 in the world in terms of savers, with 31 million members, according to Microfinance Information eXchange Inc., a microfinance-tracking outfit."

On Feb. 5 at the National Prayer Breakfast, Obama cited the profound influence his mother had on his view of life:

"I had a father who was born a Muslim but became an atheist, grandparents who were non-practicing Methodists and Baptists, and a mother who was skeptical of organized religion, even as she was the kindest, most spiritual person I've ever known. She was the one who taught me as a child to love, and to understand, and to do unto others as I would want

done," he said.

In his biographical *Dreams From My Father* published in 1995 and updated in 2004, Obama wrote that "five days a week she came into my room at four in the morning, force-fed me breakfast, and proceeded to teach me English lessons for three hours before I left for school."

Ikranagara noted that the young Obama had a way of making friends.

"He was a plump kid with big ears and very friendly," recalled Ikranagara. "He sat on a wall and flapped his arms like a bird," which made the kids laugh and broke the ice, she said.

Sutoro's anthropology thesis—excerpts of which have recently been published in *Bahasa*—explored the blacksmith's art as well as its business model, said Ikranagara. The entire work is expected to be published in English as a result of the attention created by Obama's presidency. Ancient crafts such as blacksmithing were threatened across Southeast Asia in the 1980s by the influx of mass-produced cheap products. Plastic replaced wicker, machines replaced hand-woven cloth, and factories produced previously hand-forged metal.

The last time Ikranagara saw Sutoro was 1994, about one year before Sutoro died of cancer.

"One thing that led her into working with women's livelihoods was her love of textiles," said Ikranagara. "If she were still alive, she would decorate the White House with Indonesian textiles." ★

NIGERIA from page 5

information about pesticide use, water management issues, and better harvesting techniques. Olam has also refurbished a local rice mill and implemented a rice pick-up program so farmers no longer need to make long trips to market. Once at the mill, Olam purchases rice at above-market prices, encouraging farmers to continue producing the high-quality grain.

"The Olam-USAID partnership provides a business model that can be replicated throughout Nigeria," said Leslie Flagg, USAID coordinator. "Expansion of this model will allow Nigeria to produce rice to meet domestic and eventually Africa-wide

demand. We are very excited about the possibilities."

More than 8,000 farmers have gone through the Olam-USAID training program. Farmers have doubled their productivity and increased their net incomes by 230 percent thanks to better rice yields and higher prices. Even more encouraging is the fact that younger generations are becoming interested in farming again.

Recently, the First Bank of Nigeria and the Central Bank of Nigeria joined the partnership, providing \$5 million in commercial credit to farmers. With increased access to credit, these farmers can invest in higher-quality seeds, fertilizers, tractors, and land.

For the farmers of Benue State, this means they may be able to buy a jeep so they can transport their wares to the mill more frequently. "Farmers in Benue State have a big dream for 2009," said one farmer.

For Tyoakaa and many others, rice farming is providing a more comfortable life. "I have seen the difference in my life. I am now a very comfortable farmer and I anticipate a high yield," she said. ★

TRANSNISTRIA from page 7

U.S. productivity enhancement program for apparel businesses from other Moldovan entrepreneurs, Dzernovich invited project representatives to come to his factory and assess how they could improve operations in his firm.

"Most donor projects are not interested in helping us. All the assistance they offer has strings attached," he said. "Only USAID's Competitiveness Enhancement and Enterprise Development (CEED) project took our concerns seriously."

Doug Griffith, CEED's chief of party, said that "one of CEED's conditions for assistance is that the company be willing to make the changes suggested and to share the cost of both the consultant and the changes."

Such an openness to change is not a hallmark of post-Soviet societies. Many businesses that approached CEED were rejected for assistance for that reason alone. Another common obstacle to assisting businesses in emerging markets, particularly in frozen conflict zones, is the intricate political situation.

With about 533,000 citizens, Transnistria has been in conflict with Moldova over its

independence for nearly 20 years. Though Moldova proclaimed its independence from the former Soviet Republic in 1991, Russia continues to back Transnistria's goals of autonomy.

"Politics getting in the way of business is a concern for the entrepreneur as much as for CEED," said Griffith.

"Mr. Dzernovich's first comment to us was that he was not involved in politics. I explained that neither was CEED—that our objective is to support businesses, to improve their results. And since we started working with Intercentre, there have been no problems. We've had no issues with either the Transnistrian authorities or the Moldovan government about our work in Transnistria. I think this is because everyone can agree that economic growth is a positive thing that is above politics."

It seems to be working. With direction from an expert consultant in the apparel industry sent by CEED, Intercentre Lux has reduced production time, raised its seamstresses' wages by 8 percent, raised its overall productivity over 10 percent, and increased its sales more than 20 percent. ★

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SPOTLIGHT



In the Pirang District of South Sulawesi, a group of farmers who received training from a partnership between USAID, Olam International, and Blommer Chocolate show off their high-quality cocoa beans.



Farmers and field trainers compare healthy cocoa pods.



A farmer in rural South Sulawesi shows off a healthy cocoa pod during a farmer field training session.

INDONESIAN COCOA FARMERS BENEFIT FROM TRAINING

By Lorin Kavanaugh-Ulku

SOUTH SULAWESI, Indonesia—A group of farm women sit in a makeshift, open-air classroom, listening to a trainer explain how to properly manage and tend cocoa gardens and help fight pests and crop diseases.

Some leaf through a pamphlet describing how to improve their cocoa gardens, but others take careful notes during the lecture to the Sipakammase Women's Farmer Group in Pirang District.

"Before the training, we just did some pruning and used fertilizer but we didn't really know how to care for the (cocoa) trees properly," said Irma, a 25-year-old mother of one, who goes by only one name. "Our production was pretty low."

Irma and her husband were ready to give up on their cocoa trees and started to plant maize instead. Now, the family is already reaping the benefits from the training.

"Today, I can earn more than 1 million rupiah [U.S. \$110] on my cocoa beans," she said proudly with a big smile. "Before I could only get 500,000 rupiah."

These training sessions can make the difference between success and failure. Sulawesi's cocoa industry is plagued with pests and disease, old trees, and local cocoa



At a cocoa buying station in South Sulawesi, an employee demonstrates how cocoa is "graded" for sale on the international market.

traders who do not buy the cocoa in a transparent manner.

Indonesia is the world's third largest cocoa producer, with about 70 percent of that cocoa grown in Sulawesi. On this large, lush island to the east of Java, cocoa production is a way of life for many small farmers. In recent years, however, this booming industry has been hit by seemingly insurmountable problems.

Last year, Sulawesi's cocoa farmers lost an estimated \$127 million to the ravages of a moth-like pest called the cocoa pod borer, and from diseases that blight cocoa trees. Together they can reduce cocoa yields by up to

60 percent and leave the farmer with poor quality cocoa beans. For the small farmers who rely on cocoa for year-round income, the production losses are devastating.

The AMARTA (Agribusiness Market and Support Activity) Sulawesi Kakao Alliance is a partnership between USAID, Olam International, and Blommer Chocolate that was launched Valentine's Day 2007. It aims to provide farmers greater access to training in cocoa production and post-harvest techniques. Farmers also visited cocoa buying stations where they learn about the cocoa quality, purchasing, and grading



A farmer trainer demonstrates how to properly prune cocoa trees.

processes. The ultimate goal is to improve the efficiency, productivity, and product quality of Indonesia's cocoa industry.

Nearly 12,000 farmers completed basic farmer-field training; the goal is to reach 20,000 farmers in Sulawesi. Olam has set up local buying units in South and Southeast Sulawesi, providing farmers with direct access to the major exporter. And, Blommer has agreed to pay

a premium of 200 rupiah per kilogram for export-grade Sulawesi cocoa.

For the farmers in Sulawesi, the impact this alliance has had is real. "Before we used to be so desperate about what to do with our cocoa gardens," said Tamrin, a 40-year-old farmer who uses only one name. "Now we know how to manage our cocoa and deal with pests so that we can earn more money for our families." ★

All photos by Lorin Kavanaugh-Ulku