



# OCIO CHRONICLES

Volume 1, Issue 10      October 2011

## GLAAS Works like a Charm!



As highlighted in last month's newsletter, the CIO significantly improved the performance of the Global

Acquisition and Assistance System (GLAAS) to resolve problems that occurred in handling the peak workloads during the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2010. The changes made to GLAAS have proven highly successful in handling the large 4<sup>th</sup> quarter (Q4) of FY 2011 acquisition and assistance (A&A) processing workloads. During FY 2011, USAID's bureaus and missions used GLAAS to process awards for 16,891 contracts and grants valued at almost \$9.7 billion. Of these, 8,739 awards valued at \$5.9 billion were made during Q4 of FY 2011, an increase of 79% over the number processed during Q4 of FY2010. During the last week of September, GLAAS successfully processed 2,491 awards valued at over \$2.8 billion. Within a single day on Thursday, September 29, 2011, GLAAS processed 4,087 transactions, including requisitions, validations, and awards. GLAAS' performance during peak workloads at the end of FY 2011 was consistent with expect-

tations based on improvements implemented earlier this year. Especially noteworthy was the performance of the GLAAS-Phoenix interface, which had experienced a significant bottleneck at the end of FY 2010, resulting in a queue of more than 1,000 GLAAS transactions waiting for processing. CIO staff took special actions to complete the awards on time. With its updated capacity to handle 1,459 financial integration transactions with Phoenix per hour, GLAAS easily handled the hourly peak workload of 320 transactions that occurred on September 29, 2011. Even large acquisition documents containing hundreds of lines requiring validation against Phoenix were completed within a couple of minutes. These types of documents had taken three hours or more to process on September 30, 2010. The GLAAS Team implemented an extensive communications and assistance effort to support users in completing their A&A actions. The combination of improved system performance, user actions, and GLAAS Team support resulted in the successful completion of A&A actions through GLAAS by the September 30, 2011 deadline.



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

### Inside this issue:

Cloud Computing	2
2PY Evacuation Report	2
Road warrior or Collaborator?	2
Ready, Set, Google!	3
IT Privacy and Security at USAID	4
We've got an App for that!	4

## Google Tip!



The "Conversation" view in Google Mail allows you to see your emails as "conversations." In Conversation view, each new message is stacked on top of the ones that arrived before it, so that the newest message is always the one you see first. Replies to emails (and replies to those replies) are displayed in one place and in the order in which they are sent and received. If you prefer not to see your emails using the Conversation view, go to the **General** tab of your Gmail settings, and select "Conversation view off".

If you would like to submit an article or you have an interesting story to tell us, please send an email to [cionewsletter@usaid.gov](mailto:cionewsletter@usaid.gov)

Questions, comments and concerns are also encouraged as we strive to make our newsletter better.

# Cloud Computing: An A+ for Advantages!



OCIO's move to "the cloud" results in many advantages for USAID IT users. Cloud computing:

- **Offers device independence.** With cloud computing, you're no longer tethered to a single computer or network. Change computers or move to a different device, and your existing applications and documents (apps and docs) follow you through the cloud. There's no need to buy a special version of a program for a particular device, or to save your document in a device-specific format.
- **Facilitates group collaboration.** Sharing documents leads directly to collaborating on documents. Multiple users can collaborate easily on documents and projects, working together in real time from different locations! Because the documents are hosted in the cloud, not on individual computers, all you need is a computer with an Internet connection, and you can collaborate!
- **Frees up internal resources.** By outsourcing storage, server, and other IT service needs, USAID shifts the burden placed on our in-house IT team to a third-party provider. The result: OCIO can focus on business-critical tasks while ensuring that IT services are being reliably provided.
- **Increases data availability.** With desktop computing, a hard disk crash can destroy all your valuable data. If you're using the cloud and your personal computer crashes, your data is still accessible from anywhere with an Internet connection.
- **Improves IT service for end-users.** Network outages can send an IT department scrambling, and it can take several hours before a problem is resolved. But in the case of cloud computing, a third-party vendor provides 24/7 customer support and immediate response to emergency situations. Outages do still occur, but they tend to be resolved quickly.



One disadvantage: **Cloud computing requires an Internet connection.** Cloud computing is impossible if you can't connect to the Internet because you use the Internet to connect to your apps and docs. In areas where Internet connections are few or inherently unreliable, cloud computing is not your best option.

It is important to note: Cloud computing requires an Internet connection. Users should have a reliable internet connection in order to access apps and docs. In areas where Internet connections are unreliable, cloud computing should be supplemented with traditional offline computer programs.

## 2PY Evacuation Report

In light of recent natural disasters experienced in the DC metropolitan area, USAID conducted a Fire Drill at 2 Potomac Yards (2PY) on September 29, 2011. USAID evacuated the 8th, 10th, and 11th floors, and worked closely with EPA, the Agency responsible for coordinating building security at 2PY. The result: a few thousand employees and visitors in 2PY on that day were successfully and safely evacuated in **11 minutes and 42 seconds!** Thank you to everyone who cooperated to make this drill a success.



BJ Boyden: USAID Designated Evacuation Official for 2 Potomac Yards

## Welcome to OCIO!

Rachel Sayre joins USAID M/CIO as a Communications Specialist. Before coming to USAID, Rachel worked as a marketing writer and strategist for technical experts at Fortune 500 companies and small startups. Through interactive campaigns and marketing materials, Rachel helped bring products and visions to life for different audiences. A Presidential Management Fellow, she earned her master's degree in International Affairs from Penn State University. Most recently, Rachel taught a college sociology course in Bhutan. Now, she is excited to be a part of the CIO team.



### Are You a Road Warrior? A Collaborator? Cloud Computing is Perfect for You!

**Road warriors.** When you work at your Agency office one day, at home the next day, and in another city the day after that, it's tough to keep track of all your documents and applications. With cloud computing, you don't have to remember where you stored that last document or even bring a copy of the document with you. You don't even have to worry about whether a particular application is installed on all your PCs. Since the apps and docs you use are stored on the Web and accessible wherever you have an Internet connection, document versions and software compatibility simply aren't issues. You have the same applications and the same documents wherever you go.

**Collaborators.** If you often collaborate with other people on group projects, you're an ideal candidate for cloud computing. The ability for multiple users to share and edit documents in real time is one of the primary benefits of web-based applications. It makes collaborating easy and even fun.

## Ready, Set, Google!



Henry Ford once said, “If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself.” It’s a message that rings loud and clear in the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO). The OCIO regularly reaches out to the Agency’s international and stateside staff to promote knowledge management tools that can help us all move forward together *better by collaborating and sharing information in new and efficient ways.*

How far into the field will the OCIO reach to ensure that everyone in the Agency knows about our new management tools, knows when they will be made available, and understands how to use them? As far as we need to! Recently OCIO’s Knowledge Service Center Knowledge Management (KM) and Google Deployment teams joined forces and headed to the USAID/Peru and USAID/Kenya Missions. The team’s goal was to provide pilot training to Mission staff to teach them how to use USAID’s new Google e-mail, calendar, chat, and document resources.

But what the team actually achieved was far greater than its original goal. Both the Missions and the training team emerged with new ideas and understandings about each other’s needs and ways to support the transition to these new resources. Here is just a glimpse into the KM team’s experiences as chronicled in their blog postings.

**First day** ...Wow - what a day! The day was super busy but also productive and interesting and fun. Technically, everything went well. We had a full class of 15 or so for the morning and 9 for the afternoon... the crowd was incredibly chatty and engaged. The Mission Director even joined us for a little while.

**Last day**... The Regional Director today stated that we reached 95% of the people in the Lima Mission through our trainings... Both classes today were totally full - and it's the Friday before a holiday weekend, mind you. People were eager and interested overall... An excellent suggestion from one of those managers was to have us back in a few months once people are comfortable with the tool and really need to start seeing it applied to the processes.

### From USAID/Peru



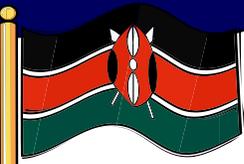
OCIO’s continues its indefatigable effort to keep the Agency moving forward together. While the Google Deployment team continues to provide targeted support and training, the KM team continues to introduce Agency staff to the full array of knowledge management tools now available, which in addition to Google also include blogs, a wiki, and collaboration spaces. To learn more about the Agency’s Google applications, visit [google.usaid.gov](http://google.usaid.gov) via your Chrome browser. Check out the Google Deployment team’s Online Google Support site at [googlesupport.usaid.gov](http://googlesupport.usaid.gov). And to request a KM team consultation or training on USAID’s knowledge management resources, contact the USAID Knowledge Services Center KM team at [KSC@usaid.gov](mailto:KSC@usaid.gov).



**First day**... Today was the first day of Google training at the Missions. We answered questions, showed them how to do some things, compared Google features to features they are familiar with in Microsoft, and gave them some work-smarter examples. People left happier and more comfortable than when they arrived... We are gaining an understanding of some of the Mission's work processes.

**Last day**... Training went out with a bang. We had 28 people for the final session this morning. There are only 26 terminals in the training room. Just as we got to Google Docs the Internet broke. An interesting way to end our time in Kenya.

### From USAID/Kenya



**First day**...The training team was greeted with several questions from the Mission. The staff had been on the Google Suite for a few days and excited for the trainings and discussions regarding Google capabilities. It was a learning experience for both the mission staff and the training team; we learned exactly how the mission needed to use the Suite, which enabled us personalize the training based on those needs. The training room had about 15 computers and staffs were doubled up at every station. While this wasn’t ideal, it was essential to reach as many people as possible.

**Last day**...The last day of training was bittersweet - we developed quite a rapport with the Mission staff and although we trained about 75% of the mission, we felt there was so much more we could do. We prepared a “Happy Google Day, El Salvador” collection in Google Docs that contains all our training and support materials and maintain contact with the mission IT staff to ensure their transition continues to go smoothly.

### From USAID/El Salvador



# IT Privacy and Security in USAID



IF WE COLLECT IT, WE MUST PROTECT IT

The USAID Privacy Office and the USAID Information Security Office are Divisions within the OCIO under the leadership of William Morgan. William (Bill) Morgan is dual-hatted as the Chief Privacy Officer (CPO) and the Chief Information Security Officer (CISO). Although the two organizations have slightly different agendas, we work as one united force, supporting each other's program and relying on each other to achieve the best security protection possible for

USAID's IT operations. When CPO and CISO are included on the front end of any new project or plan development, strong security and privacy protections are built into the system from the start. This approach saves considerable money, time, and energy by avoiding the need for changes during development. CPO and CISO are here to assist IT project managers plan for and execute security requirements, and to ensure that all security mandates and regulations are met.

## National Cyber Security Awareness Month

October 2011 marks the 8th National Cyber Security Awareness Month (NCSAM). Please visit the attached link to President Obama's proclamation of NCSAM.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/10/03/presidential-proclamation-national-cybersecurity-awareness-month>

## We've got an App for that!

### Field Notes



Fusing photography and geospatial technology, the Field Notes application ("app") lets you upload an iPhone or iPad snapshot of your program in action -- building a school or providing an ambulance, for instance. Tap out a few words describing the who, what, where, when, and whys depicted in your photo, and *voila!*, the Field Notes community can now see your good work in real life and know where in the world your work is taking place.

Here's how it works: When you take a picture with a mobile device, it stores the image's geographic coordinates (detected by your phone's internal global positioning system, or GPS, device). When you upload your picture to Field Notes, the picture's coordinates are transmitted with it, which the app uses to place your image on a Google map.

On the most basic level, the pictures you upload to Field Notes offer a window into your Mission's or program's activities. On a more innovative level, the application could help transform how we think of our work. Although the app is still being piloted, it is available for you to use, and we hope you will.

To get started using this app, register for access to the CIO Mobile Application Store. Next, sign-up for the Field Notes app pilot by sending an e-mail to [appstore@info.usaid.gov](mailto:appstore@info.usaid.gov). You'll receive guidance on how to access and install the app. After that, you're ready to start sharing your photos -- and your life's work.

### Did you know that...

- Once an intruder gains entry to a system through one password (such as the one he stole from you), he can gain access and control of other machines and systems and even capture information about other users?
- Once an intruder penetrates remote systems to which local users connect, the probability of a breach in other systems connected to USAID increases?

### To keep our systems secure and to protect, remember:

- Always use strong passwords. Change them significantly when you update them -- don't just change one letter, number, or character.
- Store your passwords in your head, not on paper or in any electronic device

The following Apps are now available through the new USAID CIO Mobile Application Store (<http://appstore.usaid.gov>).

### Shuttle Buddy

Shuttle Buddy is an interactive bus scheduling tool that runs on any iPhone or iPad enabled with a GPS chip. You can select a bus route from a defined list (it includes SA-44, 2PY, and State). The tool will display the scheduled arrival time for the next available bus, as well as the location of the stop closest to you. In addition, you can use the app to get directions that will lead you from your current location to any selected stop.

Please contact [appstore@info.usaid.gov](mailto:appstore@info.usaid.gov) for more information or to offer comments and suggestions.

SHUTTLE BUDDY



USAID  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE