Bush Announces $15 Billion AIDS Relief Plan

The United States will dramatically increase spending on the global fight against HIV/AIDS with a $15 billion Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, announced President Bush in his State of the Union speech January 28. The money will be spent over five years in 14 heavily affected countries of Africa and the Caribbean, where most of the world’s 40 million infections are found. The initiative includes $10 billion in new funding that the President will seek from Congress in an effort to prevent 7 million new infections in the target countries and care for 10 million HIV-infected individuals and AIDS orphans.

The relief plan also will provide antiretroviral drugs for 2 million HIV-infected people. AIDS drug costs recently fell from an average of $12,000 per year to $300 per year in developing countries, but only 50,000 people receive the drugs in Africa today. The United States announced on December 20, 2002, that it would permit poor countries to override patents on drugs to fight HIV/AIDS and other epidemics. The $15 billion plan triples the current U.S. commitment to fighting HIV/AIDS globally. Funding begins with $2 billion in FY 2004 and includes $1 billion for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria.

To coordinate all U.S. participation in international HIV/AIDS programs, the President will name a Special Coordinator for International HIV/AIDS Assistance at the State Department. The nominee will be confirmed by the Senate. The 14 countries targeted by the new plan are Botswana, Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Guyana, Haiti, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. ★ www.usaid.gov/about/hivaids

United States Documents Iraq’s Weapons, Links to Terror

On February 5, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell showed the U.N. Security Council declassified satellite photos and played intercepted tape recordings of Iraqi officials he said proved Iraq was hiding weapons of mass destruction and has ties to terrorists. “Saddam Hussein and his regime have made no effort to disarm, as required by the international community,” Powell said. He showed drawings of trucks with mobile equipment for producing biological weapons, and photos of a bunker that he said had been emptied of chemical weapons days before a visit by U.N. inspectors. The Security Council meeting, broadcast around the world, also heard a tape recording of what Powell said was an Iraqi general ordering another officer to delete all mention of “nerve agents” from wire-recording of what Powell said was an Iraqi’s order to “kill Americans.”

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Powell said Iraq is sheltering a follower of Osama bin Laden—Abu Musab Zarqawi—who Powell said ordered the “despicable” murder of USAID’s Laurence Foley, “whose sole mission was to assist the people of Jordan.” Powell said hard drives from Iraqi computers involved in nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons programs were hidden before inspectors’ visits and Iraqi scientists were ordered to hide related documents in their homes. ★ www.state.gov/p/nea/disarm

AIDS PREVALENCE DECLINES IN UGANDA

Percentage of pregnant women who tested HIV positive at antenatal clinics

This graph shows the trends in HIV prevalence among pregnant women in Kampala, Uganda, 1990–2000. Similar trends have been seen in other populations. USAID has been the lead donor in Uganda since the late 1980s, employing the ABC strategy: Abstain, Be Faithful, or Use a Condom.


MONKS AS CHANGE AGENTS

Mons from the Kiam Kex Temple in Cambodia attend the funeral of a woman from the community who died from AIDS-related complications. With USAID training, these monks are helping communities overcome their fear of AIDS and meet the needs of their neighbors living with HIV/AIDS. Before the funeral procession began, one monk called out to the community, “Come and join us, come with us, we are burying one of our.” Globally, USAID is working with community and faith-based groups to care for people living with HIV/AIDS, provide support for their children and families, and prevent new infections.

Bengali Imams Study Rights

DHAKA, Bangladesh—Although Muslim clerics may rail against American influence in some countries, 200 imams in Bangladesh were so impressed with a tour of U.S. development projects that the USAID mission in Dhaka was asked to offer instruction on human rights and women’s issues to thousands of the country’s 200,000 imams.

Bangladesh, a moderate Islamic country of 135 million, recently required all its imams take a 40-day retraining program to provide them with modern views of society, education, tolerance, and even agriculture and health. “The imams have been memorizing things to be imams,” Saifur Rahman, Minister of Finance and Planning, told FrontLines in December. “But they need to learn about human rights. We would like to see that imams have more worldly views. They must be up to date and come into the mainstream.”

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FEBRUARY 2003
U.S. Offers Support to Emerging Independent Media

As independent media struggle to take root since the end of the Cold War, USAID and the State Department continue to offer strong support in the form of training, exchange visits, advice, and even equipment for newspapers and broadcasters. Despite U.S. help, the independent press faces an uphill struggle. Newspapers have been shut down, journalists and publishers threatened or jailed, and newsprint denied to government critics. Governments, business figures, the military, rebel groups, and religious extremists are often intolerant of alternative views. Independent media have become targets of racists, terrorists, ethnic tribalists, criminal syndicates, drug gangs, and political strongmen in too many countries.

In many developing countries, the economy is too weak to support advertising—the mainstay of most independent media in the United States and Europe. When media can’t pay decent salaries or expenses, corruption may result. Influential people and officials can kill bad news or place “puff pieces” by paying media owners or journalists who are hard pressed to pay their bills or feed their families.

In Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Guinea, some reporters can’t afford phone calls, modern computers, photocopying, or even bus fares to cover stories. During the Cold War, the U.S. government pierced the Iron Curtain with objective news via the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, and Radio Liberty. Some of those broadcasts continue, including the new Arabic-language Radio Sawa.

But since communism collapsed and many former one-party states now hold multiparty elections, USAID and the State Department are attempting to help countries move toward democracy by supporting the formation and training of independent newspapers and radio and television stations. State and USAID media programs have four major aspects, according to John Langlois, Senior Media Advisor with the Agency’s Office of Transition Initiatives: Journalism education—U.S. media professionals go overseas to train journalists and publishers on reporting styles, accuracy, balance, fairness, gathering information, writing clearly, separating commentary from reporting, protecting sources, and covering sensitive issues such as ethnic and religious conflict. Foreign journalists also visit U.S. newspapers and broadcast stations to observe how the free press operates.

Business development—To help emerging independent media escape the control of government or business groups, U.S. programs teach media owners and managers about advertising, marketing, and financial management.

Legal protection—U.S. aid helps draft media laws that can protect the ability of the press to cover governmental and other topics without fear of harassment.

Professional associations—Media support funds help journalists, editors, and media owners form groups that protect members, raise standards, and win access to public documents and officials.

U.S. assistance also may buy presses, transmitters, broadcasting equipment, and newsroom computers.

Because many countries—from Russia to Burkina Faso—have for years lived without independent media and competing views, the emergence of a free press is an evolutionary process that will take decades, not years, said Peter Graves, Senior Media Advisor for the Bureau for Europe and Eurasia. ★ www.usaid.gov/hum_response/oti/locus/media.html

BULGARIAN MEDIA HELPED WITH HEROIN INVESTIGATION

When an independent weekly magazine in Bulgaria heard that Osama bin Laden was shipping heroin across Bulgaria into Europe, it turned to USAID for help in covering the story.

Bulgaria lies in a region—stretching from the Adriatic to the Black Sea—affected by the Yugoslav civil wars and a lack of strong governmental control over corruption and transportation. After the attacks of September 11, 2001, rumors spread that “nukes”—or people carrying Afghan heroin—were being sent by bin Laden across Bulgaria to raise money for his terrorist campaign.

The weekly newsmagazine, 168 Hours, needed help investigating these reports. A USAID-funded media advisory contractor, IREX, helped the weekly pay for staff to track the heroin story and supplied three weeks of training in investigative reporting, fact checking, and developing online computer resources.

The story, when it broke in April 2002, led to investigation of government officials.

INDONESIAN MEDIA GETS OTI SUPPORT

USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) supports 50 Indonesian radio stations with training that helps journalists understand and cover political issues, better equipment to expand their field reporting, and legal assistance to secure freedom of the press.

OTI funded Indonesia’s first televised political party debates on economic issues and helped jumpstart the country’s first radio talk show dedicated to gender issues. U.S. media support programs also help civil society groups use media to stimulate public discourse and provide information necessary for informed decisionmaking.

“Media is important because of its role in covering conflicts and fueling conflicts,” said an Indonesian journalist receiving the training. “For example, I am Muslim. If I always covered stories about the economy, I wouldn’t be objective.”

VOA-USAIJD JOURNALISM PROJECT THRIVES IN ANGOLA

After decades of war, repression, and control of media in Angola, USAID’s partnership with the Voice of America (VOA) provided $4.2 million to develop news programs and train journalists to report and produce fact-based programs. The result is Línea Directa, Línea Abierta, a daily, 30-minute news magazine show that is broadcast from Angola, a country of about 10 million people that is twice the size of Texas.

VOA’s Portuguese-to-Africa Service runs the program. As its Chief, Neils Linquist, said, “When we started, the program concentrated on coverage of the war, but at the same time established itself as a voice for the voiceless and a forum for civil society.” Línea Directa now covers previously off-limits topics such as HIV/AIDS, oil and diamonds, the economy, health, politics, women’s issues, and democracy.

Angolan journalist Amelia Mendes said, “Our program tells the truth and allows everyone to hear it. This is our contribution to democracy.”

Besides producing a top-rated show, the USAID-VOA project has resulted in the training of scores of journalists, including those who work for the program.

COMMUNITY RADIO GETS BOOST IN HAITI

To assist the small community radio stations that reach most of the 6 million Haitians living outside cities, USAID last year began working with about 20 stations, boosting their technical level at first and later working on journalistic skills. Another 20 stations will be helped in 2003.

These small stations generally can’t get advertising revenue because the economy is so weak. However the Agency, working through Creative Associates International, Inc., is providing some training on how to get contributions from donors, local governments, and other sources. In return, the stations would run public service announcements about important programs and activities. They also broadcast news and some discussion.

The USAID mission in Port-au-Prince began the project by assessing radio stations’ needs, said Mark Koenig of the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance. It is to spend from $2.6 to $3.5 million over two to three years.

Some stations received transmission equipment and production equipment while others had their antennas raised. “Recently we started to train the community radio journalists how to do their job better—journalism training,” said Koenig.

The next step is to work with two rival journalism associations to help them work together on issues such as legal and physical protection for reporters and broadcasters.
Peace Corps Director Gaddi Vasquez told employees at a USAID/ Washington forum hosted by the Hispanic Employee Council for Foreign Affairs Agencies on January 15 that the agencies—both founded in the early 1960s—enjoy a close relationship because USAID officials and Peace Corps volunteers share a common love of development work.

Over the past 42 years, a significant number of Peace Corps volunteers have gone on to careers at USAID or the State Department. But now, Vasquez noted, a two-way street is emerging: “We are seeing a trend in former Peace Corps volunteers returning from their development careers at USAID and returning [to the Corps].”

Over its 42-year history, the Peace Corps has attracted some 168,000 volunteers who have served in 135 countries. Today, there are 7,000 volunteers in about 70 countries. Thirty more countries have requested Peace Corps programs.

Since 1985, USAID has provided millions of dollars in grant funds and technical assistance for low-cost, grassroots development efforts that are directly administered by Peace Corps staff and volunteers. Over the years, the joint Small Project Assistance program has funded thousands of small-scale, self-help projects designed to stimulate economic growth and agricultural development, improve health and HIV/AIDS treatment, protect the environment, and provide education and training. In F. 2002, USAID provided $1 million in funding for the program.

USAID FUNDING FOR PEACE CORPS PROJECTS

Peace Corps Director Gaddi Vasquez addresses a USAID audience filled with former Peace Corps volunteers.

And President George W. Bush has announced an initiative to double the number of volunteers over the next five years. The task is well underway, made easier by a 15 percent increase in the number of Peace Corps applicants between 2001 and 2002.

Vasquez said he hopes to widen the diversity of volunteers: “The Peace Corps has embarked on a new marketing and strategic recruitment effort to reach out to people of all back­grounds—the Asian community, the African American community, the Hispanic community, older Americans, married couples, and single people—so as we go about our work overseas, we are more diverse, more like the real United States of America.”

The Director also remarked on the increasing numbers of couples and older Americans applying: “We are seeing a surge in retiring Americans from other walks of life who have decided to no longer ignore unmet needs in the developing world. There is no age limit to service in the Peace Corps—we welcome you at any age!”

Though Vasquez noted that the Peace Corps wants to place more volunteers in Muslim countries, he added: “If we cannot deliver a safety and security structure, then we are not going in.” He suspended the Peace Corps program in Jordan last fall, after the assassination of USAID Executive Officer Laurence M. Foley Sr., himself a former Peace Corps volunteer.

Vasquez said that former volunteers “left a positive, lasting legacy—set the mark, left imprints for others to follow—in sustaining this grand vision, this great experiment.”

www.peacecorps.gov

The Lessons of Failed and Failing States

The first lesson of failed and failing states is the need to understand their dynamics. No two are exactly the same, although we do see recent patterns. Our responses must fit each situation. We must take great care that our interventions do no harm.

Second is that failed and failing states are invariably the product of weak, dysfunctional, or predatory governments. Any solution must begin with improving the quality of governance. There is no substitute for good political leadership and genuine democracy. Third is the high cost of failure.

Complex humanitarian emergencies have increased dramatically since the Cold War ended. As the world leader in humanitarian aid we have to respond. Since 1999, the United States spent more than $1 billion on Sudan and $1 billion on Afghanistan—that was even before the attacks of 9/11.

Fourth is the need to develop a coherent, integrated strategy for each crisis, using the programs and funding sources within DCHA and the appropriate regional bureaus.

Putting These Lessons to Work

In Burundi, where the threat of inter-ethnic violence is very high, OFDA, FFP, OTI, PVC and the DG Office have joined the Bureau for Africa to support the transition government, encourage responsible media, promote civil society and economic growth, and provide basic food security.

The Fergana Valley is one of the most volatile regions in Asia. To reduce tensions there, our regional mission in Almaty is working with local NGOs and ethnic groups in villages along the borders to help craft common approaches to water, land, and social service problems. These projects reinforce at a local level what our economic development and democracy programs seek to do at the national and regional level.
Peruvian Stamp Promotes Girls' Education

LIMA—Peru has created a postage stamp honoring girls' education after a campaign by a U.S.-assisted group of advocates, educators, and officials. The stamp shows smiling children on the petals of a flower and a motto that translates “If our girls blossom...our country blossoms.” Under the flower is the word analfabetismo, which means “illiteracy.”

The Postmaster General of Peru announced he would release the new stamp in early 2003, in part to honor the National Network for Girls’ Education (FLORECER), a group of 25 organizations that includes government ministries, the private sector, and local and international NGOs. FLORECER was created out of an initiative by USAID’s Office of Women in Development to increase rural girls’ access to primary school. Although USAID’s financial support has ended, FLORECER continues to advocate on behalf of rural girls.

Women’s Development, A Key to the Future

The Women in Development (WID) Office supports the Agency’s progress in making development more effective as well as more equitable.

“We will not achieve our development goals unless the entire Agency takes the roles of both women and men into account in development programming,” said Administrator Natsios.

WID Office Director Katherine Blakeslee, see her office as a catalyst, WID helps build capacity to address gender in USAID mission programs throughout the world and helps meet Agency requirements for gender analysis in the development of strategic plans.

An important aspect of the office’s work is identification of gender dimensions in most cutting-edge development challenges—including HIV/AIDS, economic globalization and trade, the information communications technology revolution, trafficking in persons, and the continual flare-up of internal conflicts.

Significant gender dimensions persist in such long-standing challenges as the elimination of poverty and the provision of education and basic health care.

WID announced in October 2002 the award of a five-year $240 million agreement with six contacts—including HIP/AIDS, economic globalization, education, and basic health care.

Since hundreds of thousands of people in countries that receive U.S. aid are bought, sold, or pressured into prostitution and other forms of slavery each year, the Agency has developed a strategy for the economic, legal, and moral fight against trafficking in human beings.

The new strategy, which is expected to be released shortly, will help draw attention to the dark and terrifying corners of the world where children toil in sweatshops and girls spend their youth in brothels.

USAID’s Office of Women in Development leads the Agency’s antitrafficking efforts.

Most people who are bought or sold into bondage are women and children. They become commodities, working as bonded laborers, prostitutes, maids, or child soldiers.

Trafficking is both an abuse of human rights and a development problem. Poverty, conflict, political transition, and inadequate educational and economic opportunities for women and girls help ensure a steady supply of desperate individuals and families on whom traffickers prey.

Missions in countries where trafficking is a serious problem should support direct

Fighting Slavery and Human Trafficking

promoting public awareness of the issue and its dangers

expanding economic opportunity, girls’ education, and information on legal rights

supporting shelter, legal aid, vocational training, and social integration for those trafficked into child labor, prostitution, and other forms of slavery.

The Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 requires the State Department to submit to Congress each year a list of countries of origin, transit, or destination for victims of “severe forms of trafficking.”

Beginning next year, countries listed by the State Department as failing to make significant efforts to meet minimum standards to end severe forms of trafficking are subject to a cutoff of nontrade, nonhumanitarian aid, unless granted a waiver for U.S. national security reasons.

In 2001, President Bush established the Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. USAID assistance to fight trafficking has grown from over $6 million in 2001 to more than $10 million in 2002.

West African Women to Get Trade Help

West African women have long engaged in cross-border trade, but the growth of their businesses has been limited by gender-specific barriers. Women often lack credit, and may not have title to property or other assets needed as loan collateral.

Women traders also often lack the skills and knowledge needed to compete in modern, technologically advanced markets and to comply with laws and regulations. With the growth of globalization, the capacity to compete in emerging trade markets has become even more critical.

A 30-month joint venture between the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade, Office of Women in Development (WID), and the West Africa Regional Program will identify and reduce barriers to trade faced by businesswomen in seven countries. Women entrepreneurs will be linked to new resources that will enhance their international business skills and position them to participate more fully in new trade opportunities.

The current initiative will begin with an analysis supported by WID, of regional flows of products traded by women, laws and regulations governing trade activities, and procedures for starting, operating, and expanding businesses.

International Business Initiatives will carry out studies in selected West African countries. Study results will help public and private stakeholders lobby for relevant policy and institutional changes for improving the business climate for women.

FROM GHANA TO PHILADELPHIA

Fashion designer Salma Salifu of Accra, Ghana founded her business in 1992 with only one sewing machine. Her firm was employing 10 seamstresses when she took USAID-supported information technology training.

Training has changed everything—it has been instrumental in helping me expand my business, she said. After that training, she purchased a computer, established an internet account, and began to communicate with and send photographs of her products by e-mail to potential customers.

Recently, a Philadelphia company signed a contract for her clothing after seeing samples.

Now, Salifu is moving her business to larger quarters and projects hiring another 40 seamstresses.

Her designs have also been featured in boutiques in Washington, D.C., and Baltimore.
AFGHANISTAN—The United States has begun a large-scale set of communication systems throughout Afghanistan that will connect remote areas to the capital and other regions. The $290,000 USAID initiative will link the Afghan government in Kabul with its 31 provincial governments through a radio network.

For the first time in the country's history, the central government will be able to communicate directly with all of the provinces—a major step in the stabilization of the country and an enormous benefit to the average Afghan citizen who will gain from a more efficient and better connected government.

USAID is funding the purchase of equipment and training of personnel. The Ministry of Communications is finding operational costs, including maintenance and repair in Kabul and the provinces. The equipment—high-frequency radio sets—can send voice messages, e-mails, and scanned documents.

"It is vital and important that the central government establishes its connections with provincial authorities, and this project will greatly facilitate this," said Craig Buck, USAID/Afghanistan Mission Director.

The first phase of the project began in mid-December 2002 with the training and installation of radio sets in Kabul and in the provinces of Khost, Pakta, Paktika, Bamyan, Nooristan, Sari Pul, and Kunduz. Two of these provinces—Paktika and Nooristan—had never been directly connected to Kabul.

ALBANIA—The Electricity Regulatory Authority of Albania and the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission signed a memorandum of understanding January 17 to aid Albania in restructuring and reforming its energy sector.

The agreement, funded by USAID, helps to strengthen a relationship between the Indiana commission and the Albanians that started in 2002.

"This cooperation is essential in enabling Albania to develop and implement a national energy policy and strategic plan, focusing on developing efforts on supporting more comprehensive sector reform," said Robert Ichord, Chief of the Energy and Infrastructure Division of USAID's Bureau for Europe and Eurasia.

"This work is not only a priority for Albania's economic and social development but is also a key link in the new electricity market initiatives being implemented in southeastern Europe."

BRAZIL—After recent flooding in the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais, USAID announced it is providing $50,000 for the local purchase of relief supplies to Servicio Voluntario de Asistencia Social, the primary Brazilian NGO in the state. Among relief supplies to be purchased are emergency food and blankets.

According to Minas Gerais officials, the flooding killed 45 people, injured 98, displaced more than 16,000, and damaged or destroyed more than 8,500 homes.

Since January 16, heavy rains have caused extensive flooding in the southeastern states of Rio de Janeiro, Espirito Santo, Sao Paulo, and especially Minas Gerais, where the government has declared a "state of public calamity" for 33 municipalities.

MEXICO—In response to the earthquake in Mexico on January 21, USAID quickly provided $100,000 to the American Red Cross for the local purchase of emergency shelter supplies, food, blankets, hygiene items, and other relief supplies.

"I am pleased that the U.S. responded so quickly following this terrible disaster. USAID-tragedy teams were on the ground hours after the earthquake, helping to prevent further death and destruction and assessing the damage so that appropriate assistance could be provided," said Paul White, USAID/Mexico Mission Director.

The quake hit at 8:07 p.m. local time with a magnitude of 7.8 on the Richter scale. The epicenter was in coastal Colima, in western Mexico. Tremors were felt in Mexico City, and in the states of Jalisco, Puebla, and Hidalgo.

The earthquake killed 28 people, injured at least 350, and affected 30,000 others. It damaged or destroyed nearly 9,000 homes and disrupted electricity and telecommunications services.

A three-person USAID team conducted damage assessments, and a USAID-trained Mexican search-and-rescue team from Guadalajara was sent to Colima.

MOZAMBIQUE—Top executives from several U.S. corporations have volunteered to mentor at least 16 Mozambican businessmen over the next two years under an agreement signed January 20 by USAID, the U.S. executives, and Mozambican government and business officials.

Board members, executives, and chief executive officers from Cargill, Chiquita Brands, General Mills, Liz Claiborne, McKinsey & Co., and other U.S. corporations will help their African counterparts to identify business opportunities, understand market segmentation, and size up the competition.

The U.S. executives will also help the Mozambican business owners create new business linkages and establish business relationships with other U.S. companies.

The international NGO TechnoServe will receive a grant of $750,000 from USAID to administer the program.

At least two Mozambican businesses from the following industries will be selected to participate: document processing, ecotourism, flowers, fruit, cashews, textiles, oilseed, and woody products.

This program, which links major U.S. global trading firms with Mozambican small and medium enterprises, complements and reinforces other USAID programs to expand the private sector and open the Mozambican economy to trade, said Jay Knott, USAID/Mozambique Mission Director.

"We at USAID are proud to be partnering with TechnoServe to launch the first Global Development Alliance for Mozambique, and we are particularly pleased that the alliance includes such distinguished corporations."

PERU—U.S. assistance was sent to Peru in late January, when melting snow combined with heavy rains caused severe flooding in Arequipa, Ayacucho, the Ica highlands, and several other regions.

After the U.S. Ambassador to Peru issued an emergency declaration, Administrator Natsios said USAID would provide $50,000 to its Peru mission for purchase of relief supplies. The money will pay for blankets, material for shelters, and transport of relief supplies to affected areas.

Peruvian officials said six people died, 3,500 families were displaced, and nearly 75,000 acres of arable land were lost or affected by the floods. U.N. officials said the floods cut the major highway linking Cuzco and Madre de Dios.

WASHINGTON, D.C.—President George W. Bush announced in his weekly radio address February 1 a $200 million Famine Fund "to bring immediate assistance to Africa and other regions facing starvation."

The United States gives more than 60 percent of international emergency food aid. "In the past, U.S. Famine Fund calls for only $1 billion for emergency food needs worldwide, Bush said.

The additional $200 million he pledged will buy food and help farmers produce more food, especially in Africa where 30 million people face severe food shortages and possible starvation.

"Millions are facing great affliction, but we ask the American people that they will not face it alone," Bush said.

The President also announced a $100 million Emergency Fund for Complex Foreign Crisis that will used to meet significant needs in other countries. The program, which links major U.S. global trading firms with Mozambican small and medium enterprises, complements and reinforces other USAID programs to expand the private sector and open the Mozambican economy to trade, said Jay Knott, USAID/Mozambique Mission Director.

"We at USAID are proud to be partnering with TechnoServe to launch the first Global Development Alliance for Mozambique, and we are particularly pleased that the alliance includes such distinguished corporations."

President George W. Bush has established through executive order the White House Office of Global Communications to communicate U.S. policies and values to international audiences and to counteract anti-Americanism with news about U.S. foreign assistance.

At the invitation of the White House, USAID participates on a daily basis in program and planning discussions with this office, which is headed by Tucker Eskew.

"We are the world's largest provider of food; we're the world's largest provider of funding to fight HIV/AIDS," said White House spokesman Ari Fleischer. "And yet you can travel to pockets of the world and hear a lot of anti-Americanism, a lot of statements that are not reflective of the good deeds that the American people fund through their tax dollars."

The Office of Global Communications "is a reflection of the importance the President attaches in this modern era to communicating worldwide the message of the American people and the American government," said Fleischer, "particularly as we face a war involving terrorism and other great issues involving diplomacy."

"Although the U.S. government works hard to make the world a more peaceful, better fed, better educated, healthier place," he said, "there is a recognition that we have work to do to bring that message around the world."

The White House already coordinates communications from many agencies for domestic issues, and this move reflects the President's commitment to putting the same focus on international ones.

"I think this President, particularly, has reflected on the fact that we, as Americans, take it for granted what a good, caring, compassionate country we are," Fleischer added.

While the State Department's Office of the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, with USAID involvement, remains at the forefront of international communications, the Office of Global Communications advises on the strategic direction and themes that all U.S. government agencies use to reach foreign audiences.

For example, during the planning stages for the new office over the past year, the White House worked closely with USAID in communicating the reestablishment of rights for women in Afghanistan and the United States' commitment to education, agriculture, health, and reconstruction in that country.

By coordinating the work of many agencies and focusing on a limited number of simple, honest, direct messages, the office aims to prevent misunderstanding, reduce conflict, build support for and among U.S. coalition partners, and better inform international audiences.

The Office of Global Communications will focus on daily messages, communications planning, and long-term strategy. The underlying themes—dignity, security, and liberty for all people—were reflected in the President's National Security Strategy and its focus on peace and freedom.

www.whitehouse.gov/ogc
RECFE, Brazil—It is fairly easy to take a computer apart. All you need is a screwdriver and a bit of courage. But imagine trying to put it all back together again. That’s the challenge facing hundreds of unemployed youth in Brazil.

Coming from some of the poorest slums, these young people need jobs. To get a good job, they need skills. Right now, demand is booming in Brazil for computer technicians with just the most fundamental skills. Knowing how to break down and put back together a basic desktop computer is precisely the kind of ticket needed to get a good job.

Recife, the capital of the state of Pernambuco, is home to inviting sand beaches and gleaming office towers, as well as one of the highest proportions of favela (slum) residents in the country. Youth constitute the largest group in the population, and their prospects for future employment are cloudy at best. Girls and young women are particularly at risk. “Their computer training will begin with the fundamentals,” said Marcelo Fernandes, President of the Council for Democracy and Informatics (CDI). “Youth from the poorest neighborhoods will hold computer parts in their hands as they learn about their basic functions.”

The parts will come from computers donated by Brazilian businesses and individuals who otherwise would have thrown them away. Instead, the trainees will learn to build new computers that will be donated to CDI internet training centers.

This innovative training program—and the network of internet centers that house it—are part of USAID/Brazil’s work to address the employment needs of the country’s disadvantaged youth. The Alliance for Digital Opportunity for Technology and Communication (DOT-COM) program of the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade will assist the mission in designing the curriculum, focusing in particular on the needs of girls and young women. Internships with the private sector will also be established to assure that the training leads to employment.

Each trainee will build at least one computer. If enough parts can be found, the student will build a second computer that he or she will receive as a graduation present.

To sign up for DOT-Comments, the DOT-COM newsletter, visit www.dot-com-alliance.org.

Royal Ahold’s Fruit and Vegetable Alliance

The world’s largest food sales company has found a way to improve the lives of people in Africa—as well as one of the highest proportions of girls and women in the world. Activities include the 1995 Lelant Initiative, which brought the internet to Africa the 1998 worldwide Internet for Economic Development Initiative and the upcoming Bush Administration Digital Freedom Initiative. The work included getting telecommunications policy right, opening competition, decreasing costs, and increasing services to underserved areas.

ICT activities have been tightly integrated into the following:

- Mayan language teacher-training program in Guatemala
- Handheld computers that track wildlife in Namibia
- Training for Moroccan women parliamentarians
- E-commerce training for small and medium enterprises in Mexico
- Online services in Romania

The DOT-COM program focuses as well on critical national policy reforms and learning systems that will make the information revolution more accessible to all.

The alliance between Royal Ahold and USAID aims to increase the quality and amount of pineapples exported from Ghana.
The Bali Bombing: USAID’s Rapid Response

KUTA, BALI—On October 12, 2002, two bombs rocked Kuta, the main tourist area in Bali. At least 190 people were killed and more than 300 injured. Bali’s main source of income, the tourism industry, felt the impact immediately as thousands of tourists cancelled their plans to travel to the popular holiday destination.

In response to this catastrophe, the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance funded the International Medical Corps to send doctors to Bali to assist with emergency treatment of the victims. The team was on the ground working within hours of the blast. A week later, USAID sent its own team to determine where and how the U.S. government might assist the people of Bali in addressing the impact of the bombing in the post-emergency period.

The team sent by the USAID mission in Jakarta was part of its new Office of Conflict Prevention and Response (OCPR), created to enable the mission to continue doing the type of work done by the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI). Last fall, OTI began handing off its Bali portfolio to OCPR, which continues to support quick-impact interventions to address conflict in high-priority hot spots.

Established in 1994, OTI provides fast, flexible, short-term assistance for key transition needs. Its ability to address the root causes of conflict helps bridge the gap between emergency relief and long-term sustainable development. When its short-term projects are completed, OTI hands off to other groups for longer-term work.

OTI helped increase public awareness and participation during the 1999 elections in Indonesia that followed the resignation of President Suharto. OTI also advanced governance reforms, strengthened independent media, improved civilian oversight of the military, and helped to moderate conflict.

OTI’s venture capital approach, rapid response contract mechanism, and coordination with the mission were cited as key to the program’s success. In Jakarta, U.S. Ambassador Ralph Leo “Skip” Boyce said: “The crisis strategy speaks to OTI’s comparative advantages: a venture capital approach that combines a willingness to take judicious programming risks with quick response contracting capabilities.”

A week after its initial assessment, the USAID team returned to Bali to meet with local government, private sector businesses, associations, workers’ unions, local and international NGOs, volunteer organizations, religious and community leaders, and expatriates and local citizens. The aim is to gain a deeper understanding of the problems confronting Bali and to identify a strategy for assistance in the coming months.

This strategy includes support to rehabilitate Bali’s reputation and preserve its diverse society; backing for groups that jointly address recovery issues; and bridge funding for activities such as a rapid assessment of the impact of the bombing on the Bali economy. USAID has funded 24 grants, with another 11 in the pipeline for imminent funding, for a total of $1.2 million in assistance during the four months since the bombing.

By Barbara Smith, Office of Transition Initiatives, and Laurie Purcell, Development Associate, Inc.

Monks Are ‘Change Agents’ in HIV/AIDS Care and Support

Life was not easy for 13-year old Keng Lina, her mother, and four siblings. Her father was dying of AIDS and her oldest sister had to drop out of school to care for him.

When customers stopped buying the cakes the family sold for a living and neighbors stopped speaking to them, Keng Lina’s distraught mother further isolated her children by telling the younger ones to stay at home.

That was difficult for Keng Lina’s friendly, outgoing younger sister. One day, she ventured out but returned home crying. A neighbor who saw her playing with his children had grabbed her favorite toy and thrown it away. “Don’t play with or touch anything from that family or you will get AIDS,” he warned.

Keng Lina not only heard people say her father was a “bad man” who had contracted AIDS because he went outside his home for sex, she saw her family unable to earn money and sink further into poverty.

Her mother sold the family’s motorbike to buy medicine and food. Her older sister not only cooked and did the housework, she tried to sell some of the vegetables she found in the forest and rice fields. It was not unusual for Keng Lina and her siblings to go to bed hungry.

Their wall of isolation began to crumble when a team of monks and volunteers from the nearby Wat Kien Kes Temple set out to access the needs and problems of orphans and other children affected by chronic illnesses, especially AIDS. Once Keng Lina courageously told them of her family’s plight, her family’s lives began to change.

Now Keng Lina and all her siblings are enrolled in school. They receive clothes and school supplies from the Wat Kien Kes Education Network. The volunteers also arranged for a landowner to lease land to the family and forego payment until they could sell their vegetables.

The Wat Kien Kes monks supplied them with fertilizer and helped the family buy ducks, chickens, and a pig. In return, Keng Lina’s older sister, Keng Savy, works with the monks to provide food and HIV/AIDS education to other members of the community.

She even helps bathe and wash the clothes of other AIDS victims.

Since 1996, USAID/Cambodia and its partners—Family Health International and the Khmer HIV/AIDS NGO Alliance—have been working with faith-based and community groups to provide care and support. These programs provide much-needed home-based care and other support, reduce stigma, enable communities to care for their own, and teach individuals how to prevent getting infected. USAID/Cambodia and its partners’ prevention activities have contributed to a reduction of HIV/AIDS prevalence in Cambodia.

By Mark Anthony White, Director, Office of Public Health, USAID/Cambodia
Married Couples Manage Dual Careers

Managing a successful career at USAID is complex enough for any individual; just imagine the stress when the pressure is twofold. Though the Agency doesn’t track the number of married couples who work for it, scores of them seem to be managing just fine and having twice the fun. The following are just a few of the couples who are working together in postings all over the world.

Hardship Tours Are the Key

Michael Kerst met Erna in college. After he graduated and went to Chad with the Peace Corps, it wasn’t long before Erna followed. They married in Chad. After some travel and graduate school, USAID became part of their lives. Erna became a Health Planner for the Agency, and Michael was hired as a personal services contractor (PSC).

Married for 33 years, they are now back in Washington, D.C., after many years abroad—including tandem assignments in Niger, Peru, Morocco, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. “We tended to take more hardship locations since they have more jobs open at the same time,” said Erna.

Michael and Erna commute together, try not to talk shop at home, and have lunch together as often as possible. “If you are going to have dual careers, it is best to be in the same agency. You both understand the demands of the jobs and it is more important to the Agency to help make things work out,” Erna concluded.

The Family Commutes Together

Thomas Kennedy and Felice Apter began dating 23 years ago at the University of California at Santa Cruz, where Felice was a freshman and Tom was the resident assistant at the dorm across the quad.

But they didn’t get married until 10 years later. The courtship resumed when Tom returned from the Peace Corps in Cameroon and visited a sister who lived near Felice. Felice has been at USAID/Washington 11 years. Tom had contract positions and worked for Peace Corps/Washington, then became a USAID employee four years ago.

Their only overseas assignment was in Indonesia, where Tom was a microfinance consultant and Felice was a civilian visiting scientist with a U.S. Navy medical research team.

Now living with their 3-year-old twin girls, the whole family commutes together into Washington, D.C.—the children to daycare and the adults to their offices.

Because Felice kept her own name, colleagues are often surprised to discover that they know each other, much less that they’re married.

Since Felice is a medical scientist and Tom is a microenterprise development specialist, they are only occasionally in meetings together. They are even surprised when they meet on an elevator.

Afghanistan and Twins in 2002

John Langlois and Mary Mertens met at the Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, where they discovered shared experiences: John had been a Peace Corps volunteer in Liberia and Mary grew up in Liberia where her father worked on two major USAID healthcare programs. After their marriage in 1994, Mary joined USAID as a personal services contractor.

Most of their early married life was spent in West Africa—in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea. John worked primarily with NGOs implementing USAID-funded projects. He continued this work when they returned to the United States in 1999, until he joined the Office of Transition Initiatives as a PSC in 2002. When they recently worked together on the Afghanistan Task Force, it was the first time they had been in the same office and working on the same assignment.

“It is not a negative working on the same project because you have someone at home to bounce ideas off of who really understands,” said Mary. “We tend to have a world perspective on things and just don’t leave that at the office.”

The Family Commutes Together

Patrick and Susan Fine met as Peace Corps volunteers in Swaziland and married shortly after returning to the United States 17 years ago.

Since joining USAID, they have served in Swaziland, Uganda, and South Africa. Currently they are posted in Dakar, Senegal, where they live with their two boys.

Because they live and serve mainly overseas, they wanted to put down some roots in the United States. They bought a home seven years ago in Sanapeake, New Hampshire, where the family spends home leaves and R&Rs.

Although they may encounter each other in meetings at the Dakar mission, “it is not uncommon for us to pass the entire day without seeing each other once,” Susan said. Because they have different work schedules, they need two cars. However, easy communication in the office makes it simple to coordinate picking up children and other domestic details.

At the office, Susan says, “we assume our professional roles and act more or less the same to each other as to everyone else.”

Patrick, however, thinks Susan can be tougher on him than on other colleagues. He recalls that when Susan needed information from other team leaders, most were asked nicely, while she confronted him with “Why haven’t you sent me this information yet?”

Colleagues are often surprised when they have professional differences, but the Fines view these differences as a sign that they are doing their jobs right.
Back to School and Off to Russia

Chris and Betsy Brown met at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at a luncheon for French-speaking students. Twelve months later they were married in the U.N. Chapel in New York City. In January 1982, they were the first couple admitted into the same International Development Intern training class.

Now, after 22 years of marriage and two children, they are heading to Moscow in September 2003. Chris will be heading the children, they are heading to Moscow in

Betsy will be head of the Health Office.

Much Better Than a Commuter Marriage

Margot was working in Zimbabwe as a Program Officer in her first USAID assignment overseas when she met Mervyn Ellis in Harare through work—he was chief economist of Standard Chartered Bank and a frequent commentator on the economy.

After their marriage, Mervyn remained in the private sector. He commuted to Zimbabwe for six years when Margot was assigned to USAID/South Africa, and later to USAID/West Bank and Gaza. “That was very trying—one rhythm when Mervyn was away, another when Mervyn was at home,” Margot said. “It is much easier now, knowing that he is by my side and can share in the parenting of our children and in the daily activities of our lives.”

After 14 years of marriage, they have two children, two golden retrievers, and a Somali cat.

While the Browns are immersed in six months of Russian language study they will have an opportunity to recapture the youthful enthusiasm they had as students who fell in love years ago.

The Agency has been very supportive of their assignments together; they were never faced with a long separation. Partly that was the result of more than their share of hardship tours—Mauritania, Liberia, and Haiti.

In January 1989, Chris and Betsy moved to Managua, Nicaragua where they became a “proper tandem couple.” They worked together on the USAID team and formed a strong bond.

The Browns consider their fourth tour—Mauritania, Liberia, and Haiti, where they faced with a long separation. Partly that was the result of more than their share of hardship tours—Mauritania, Liberia, and Haiti.

They now live in Accra, Ghana, with their two boys. During the work day, Ursula and Timm get together for a cup of coffee, grab a lunch of leftovers, and try to escape at a reasonable time. “Otherwise, we meet in meetings and wonder who that smart, attractive person is that looks so familiar.”

Steve Olive hails from Ohio while Cristina is originally from the Philippines. They met at graduate school at the University of Hawaii, married 12 years ago, and lived in the state until joining USAID as New Entry Professionals a few years ago.

Commuter Marriage

USAID plays a big role in their lives, but that is preferable to a commuter marriage. “I appreciate having a partner working within USAID, although getting the necessary tandem assignments with good schools can be a challenge,” said Margot. “It is wonderful to be able to vent to someone who really understands the culture and personalities within USAID.”

Some attractive bidding opportunities were precluded for them when they found that they would need to work in the same office. As Margot put it, “That’s too much togetherness!”

Margaret Ellis Economists, USAID/West Bank and Gaza, 2 years of service

Margaret Ellis

Dual Careers, Expanding Portfolios

Timm Harris and Ursula Nadolny met while jogging in Tunisia, started dating, and then went to Nepal where they became a “proper” tandem couple in 1989.

“We’ve been assigned together overseas since our marriage nearly 14 years ago,” said Timm, “thanks in part to good luck, part to our flexibility, and part to a lack of strong ambition.”

They now live in Accra, Ghana, with their two boys. During the work day, Ursula and Timm get together for a cup of coffee, grab a lunch of leftovers, and try to escape at a reasonable time. “Otherwise, we meet in meetings and wonder who that smart, attractive person is that looks so familiar.”

Except for a few years in Washington, D.C., during the mid-1980s, they have been overseas for more than 30 years—Kenya, Nepal, Nicaragua, Morocco, Mali, and now Ghana.

The Browns feel that the last thing members of a tandem couple want to talk about at home is USAID. That’s why they tend to cultivate friends outside the Agency—to get diversity of thought and opinion.

Chris Brown

Director, Health/Nutrition Office, Population, Health and Nutrition Branch, Bureau for Global Health, 21 years of service

Betsy Brown

Director, Health/Nutrition Office, Population, Health and Nutrition Branch, Bureau for Global Health, 21 years of service

Margaret Ellis

Economist, USAID/West Bank and Gaza, 15 years of service

Mervyn Ellis

Economist, USAID/West Bank and Gaza, 2 years of service

Timm Harris

Supervisory Programmer Officer, USAID/Ghana, 29 years of service

Ursula Nadolny

Supervisory Health/Population Officer, USAID/Ghana, 24 years of service

Steve Olive

Deputy, Enterprise and Rural Development Office, USAID/Nicaragua, two-and-a-half years of service

Cristina Olive

Deputy, Strategic Management and Assessment Office, USAID/Nicaragua, two years of service

Margaret Ellis

Economist, USAID/West Bank and Gaza, 2 years of service

Mervyn Ellis

Economist, USAID/West Bank and Gaza, 2 years of service

Steve Olive

Deputy, Enterprise and Rural Development Office, USAID/Nicaragua, two-and-a-half years of service

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Deputy, Strategic Management and Assessment Office, USAID/Nicaragua, two years of service
Microscience Kits Inspire Students and Teachers

ALEXANDRA, South Africa—Science teacher Nomvula Tsehla stays after school nearly every day to work with students who are excited about science and eager to work with new science kits supplied by a USAID program in 2002.

“This is the first time our school has had modern science kits,” said Tsehla. “Science is much easier to teach now. My learners have never before been so excited about this subject.”

Students previously had to congregate around a single demonstration area to observe experiments. They were seldom able to handle scientific apparatus and struggled to relate theory to reality.

After 14 years of teaching chemistry and physics without any tools in Minerva High School, Tsehla says she’s willing to put in the extra hours to keep up with student demand. “I’m glad my students in Alexandra Township ask to stay late. They can hardly wait to experiment with the new microscience kits,” she said.

One of the 700 students Tsehla teaches—16-year-old Audrey Molaudzi—recently declared that she wants to become a pharmacist. Tsehla sees that as a sign that the new science kits and improved instruction are inspiring students.

Apartheid created a serious deficit in science and technology education in South Africa. USAID works with the government and businesses to assist 102 schools dedicated to mathematics, science, and technology. The goal is not only to provide laboratory equipment such as science and math kits to disadvantaged youth, but to strengthen teacher skills in instructing these subjects.

The Agency sponsored Tsehla’s attendance at a training course in science teaching and using the kits. Every day, she teaches seven classes to students aged 13 to 18. Boys show more interest than girls in the physical sciences, the teacher says, but she wants to “encourage more girls like Audrey to pursue occupations in the sciences.”

Audrey’s enthusiasm for science soared with the arrival of the laboratory kits. “She helped to unpack and put away the kits and constantly volunteers to help set up the lab and organize demonstrations,” said Tsehla. Audrey and other students also often stay after school to conduct scientific experiments. The science kits mean hands-on opportunities for over 14,000 students to explore the mysteries of science in 62 schools in the Francis Baard District of South Africa’s Northern Cape.

The lightweight, unbreakable microchemistry kits cost less than $10. They are manufactured in South Africa and shipped to 32 countries throughout the world, including the United States. ★

www.sn.apc.org/usaidsa

By Reverie Zurba, USAID South Africa

Panama Group Forms to Save Canal Ecology

PANAMA CITY—Although Panama has little history of citizen groups taking active roles in society, a small new NGO sponsored by USAID is playing a major role in protecting the vital watershed of the Panama Canal.

The Association for the Promotion of New Development Alternatives, known by its Spanish acronym APRONAD, is one of 10 environmental NGOs selected by USAID in 2001 for a “boot camp.”

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By Reverie Zurba, USAID South Africa

The training prepared APRONAD to get cooperation from the private sector, university scholars, and public entities—perhaps for the first time in Panama—and to play a role in managing the fragile Panama Canal watershed.

The canal was turned over to Panama by the United States in 2000 and is the lifeblood of the small Central American country’s economy as well as a major world shipping route. Fourteen percent of U.S. ocean-going cargo transits the Panama Canal, saving two weeks travel around South America.

Extensive logging of forests around the large lakes supplying fresh water to the canal locks poses a threat to canal operations, the supply of clean drinking water for half of Panama’s population, and the generation of a significant amount of electricity.

USAID is developing pilot programs in several sub-watersheds to serve as models of sound management. The Agency also helps the Panamanian government to safeguard the water resources vital for canal operations.

Management of parks and protected areas in the watershed and the development of ecotourism are key parts of the U.S. strategy. USAID also is training NGOs, the private sector, and local governments in protecting the watershed’s natural environments.

The Agency also encourages NGOs to involve the private sector and use a more businesslike approach to development while encouraging the private sector to take an active role in development initiatives.

APRONAD did that by seeking technical assistance from the Florida Volunteers Association (FAVA). A FAVA volunteer, a former U.S. executive in Panama, prompted top executives of the private sector to work with APRONAD.

In October 2002, APRONAD elected a board of directors that included important private sector members. The new APRONAD president is a successful businessman who did not previously know what an NGO was. In his acceptance speech, he talked about social and corporate responsibility as a reason for returning a portion of his profits to benefit society in general, which in turn is good business.

Projects developed by the new board are intended to be profitable and beneficial to the environment. Two examples are selling recycled garbage from a large operation and the sale of indigenous handicrafts over the web. ★
U.S. Aids Bangladesh Imams to Study Social, Economic Issues

Shortly after September 11, 2001, the USAID mission organized small luncheonues with moderately fundamentalist Islamic leaders to discuss the terrorist attacks on the United States and the American response. These freewheeling discussions established goodwill and useful contacts. The mission then took 14 Islamic leaders on a bus tour of USAID project sites.

Soon after, the government-run Islamic Foundation, which provides 45 days of in-service training to the imams, wrote to the U.S. Ambassador to request specific assistance to teach village imams about controversial issues such as trafficking and family planning. “Particularly in antitrafficking and family planning, the imams seem to understand the important constructive role they can play as communities leaders,” said R. David Harden, USAID’s Regional Legal Advisor.

Since the Islamic Foundation is a highly respected institution in Bangladesh, it was able to organize forum for outreach activities and establish goodwill and useful contacts.

The foundation asked that USAID or its partners speak on these general themes and arrange a tour of local project sites. The mission then launched two, two-day pilot sessions where mission staff and partners spoke about health and nutrition, HIV/AIDS, family planning, human trafficking, home gardening, aquaculture, and shrimp farming. Two hundred imams then visited several USAID project sites.

Somewhat surprisingly, the Islamic Foundation and its students were quite interested in learning about controversial issues such as trafficking and family planning.

Working with the Islamic Foundation, USAID is expanding its collaboration with the foundation throughout the country and plans to reach 3,500 imams in 35 additional sessions over one year. ★

www.usaid.gov/bd

EUROPE AND EURASIA

U.S. Farmers Help Moldovan Dairy Cooperative Double Output

IGNATEI, Moldova—Villagers in the small village of Ignatei received land after the collapse of communism, but they were forced to lease it out and take jobs in town because they lacked farming skills—that is, until American farmers taught them how to produce more milk.

So far, almost 100 U.S. farmers have gone to Moldova under the USAID-funded Volunteer Farmer-to-Farmer Program that began in the summer of 2000. They helped the villagers turn Vita-Lact, their newly-created marketing cooperative of 140 suppliers, into a profitable enterprise.

The cooperative was formed after Moldova’s Parliament adopted a law in 2000 that permitted creation of business cooperatives similar to those known in the West and that function on modern democratic principles.

A small group of Ignatei farmers decided to work together to search for a reliable buyer of milk, one of the few commodities that generates year-round income. Because larger quantities of produce mean better bargaining power for producers, they decided to attract more people into the group.

Merle Anderson of Iowa and Boyd Wolff of Pennsylvania taught the founding members about basic cooperative principles. Wisconsin’s Richard Lettner provided technical training on milk production. Thomas Kriegl of Wisconsin helped teach the group how to manage their finances effectively, and Iowan Jim Nelson assisted the cooperative’s management to develop new services, devise a growth strategy, and define activity priorities.

When Vita-Lact decided to launch a veterinary extension program for members, the newly hired doctor received training from Joe Butterweck of California.

Finally, with advice from Pennsylvania’s Ken Bailey, the cooperative improved its marketing efforts and signed a favorable supply contract with a large dairy in Chisinau, the country’s capital.

These seven ordinary Americans each donated about three weeks of time to work shoulder-to-shoulder with the Moldovan farmers. They were among the almost 100 U.S. volunteers who went to Moldova under USAID contracts with the Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs.

When the Americans showed up to help, the fledgling cooperative began to show a profit. During its first year of operations, Vita-Lact members saw a 50 percent increase in their cash income. The average milk yield per cow doubled, and the average number of cows per farm grew from one to three.

Utilizing U.S. volunteer expertise to support the development of farmer-owned marketing cooperatives, the Farmer-to-Farmer program helps farmers in developing countries increase incomes, while forming lasting friendships with their U.S. counterparts. ★

http://moldova.usaid.kiev.ua

Farmer-to-Farmer volunteer Ken Bailey from Pennsylvania looks on as manager Vasile Gleorghita makes a payment to one of the cooperative members. The woman is happy to be making extra money as a result of her improved dairy production.
Duff Gillespie Retires, Joins Packard Foundation

After 30 years of leadership in international health assistance, Dr. Duff Gillespie retired as Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Global Health. In his “dream postretirement job,” Gillespie will join the David and Lucille Packard Foundation Population Program to work on the relationship between family planning and child survival.

Over several decades, Gillespie was a critical presence in maintaining U.S. Government support for health, most recently as a champion of vitamin A supplements in reducing the severity of infectious diseases such as malaria, measles, and diarrhea. He was instrumental in the development of the partnerships among USAID, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and other global partners that launched the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition. Gillespie’s efforts also led to the formation of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization, dedicated to ensuring that every child in the world is protected against vaccine-preventable diseases.

Recognizing early the threat posed by HIV/AIDS, Gillespie focused awareness on countries’ needs in combating the pandemic, and initiated USAID’s rapid response team for HIV/AIDS.

Throughout his career, Gillespie was a strong advocate for family planning and reproductive health in developing countries, focusing on women’s unmet need for family planning, the special needs of youth, and the effects of population momentum. He also received his Ph.D. from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. Prior to joining USAID, he worked at the Office of Economic Opportunity and at the National Institutes of Health’s Center for Population Research.

By Sandra Jordan, Bureau for Global Health
Mark Kneidinger Named Deputy Information Chief

Mark Kneidinger has been appointed USAID's Deputy Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Deputy Assistant Administrator for Management.

Kneidinger served for 20 years in the New York state government, ending up as CIO for Education before joining a Washington private software company as Director of Enterprise Application Integration Services. He also worked as a consultant to Virginia’s departments of Social Services and Health.

“My role is to monitor the performance of programs,” said Kneidinger, two days after starting work at the Agency headquarters in Washington. “I have to make sure the investments we do make in technology will be supportive of the business processes in [Washington,] D.C. as well as in the missions.”

Kneidinger’s job is to ensure that information is available throughout the system to improve decisionmaking. He will advise John Marshall, Assistant Administrator for Management, on information technology issues.

Paul DeLay Joining UNAIDS

Dr. Paul DeLay is leaving USAID after 12 years of working on HIV/AIDS programs. He is moving to Geneva to become the Director of Evaluation at UNAIDS.

DeLay joined USAID in 1991 as an advisor on preventing sexually transmitted infections. In 1997, he was promoted to Director of the HIV/AIDS Division, which then had a budget of $119 million and a staff of 10. Over the next five years, he oversaw its elevation to an office, with a budget of $510 million and a staff of almost 40.

At a going-away party in January, colleagues praised DeLay for his unique combination of intelligence, compassion, and sense of humor.

Gary Newton, who worked with DeLay in the Bureau for Global Health and earlier in Malawi, said: “Paul has the rarest of gifts, the ability to maintain grace and good humor under pressure, unrelieved pressure!”

Caroll Peasley, USAID/Russia Mission Director, sent the message: “You provided outstanding leadership to USAID and made us leaders in the fight against HIV/AIDS. I’m proud to have worked with you; I’m proud to call you a friend.”

Before joining USAID, DeLay practiced clinical medicine for 13 years, including eight years as Medical Director of Refugee Medical Services for the City of San Francisco. In 1988, he joined the World Health Organization’s Global Program on AIDS, working primarily in Malawi.

Tom Woods, New Africa DAA

Thomas M. Woods, recently appointed Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Africa, is eager to tackle agriculture and other basic development issues.

“I think the agriculture issue for Africa is going to be a big push for me,” Woods said. “It’s part of the reason I’m excited about being here.”

“Our mission is not only handling the short-term problems of drought in southern Africa and Ethiopia but looking at the underlying causes of these food security issues.” Woods most recently served as Special Advisor to the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, working on policy, budget, program management, human resources, and bureau management. From 1996 to 2001, he was the Officer in Charge of Democracy and Human Rights Policy and Programs in the State Department’s Bureau of African Affairs. From 1995 to 1998, Woods was a refugee policy analyst for the United States Catholic Conference.

His responsibilities at USAID will include planning, directing, and supervising the Office of Southern Africa Affairs, the Office of Development Planning, and the Administrative Management Staff. He will also provide guidance in the formulation of bilateral and regional programs for the southern Africa region; review and recommend approval of regional and country programs and projects; and be involved in development agreements with African countries.

Mable Meares Retires After 31 Years

Mable Meares, the Director of the Office of American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA), retired from USAID in January 2003. She devoted more than 37 years to government service, 31 of them with USAID.

Meares began her career with the Agency in 1971 as an Intern with the Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination. In 1973, she worked in various offices in the Bureau for Africa, serving primarily as an International Cooperation Specialist.

Her career with ASHA began in 1991. She has overseen the entire ASHA grant process, which has committed more than $800 million since its inception in 1957.

Meares said the ASHA program is one of the best in the Agency, providing the best job she has had. As she put it, “In ASHA, you experience the development of a project from start to finish. It has been very challenging, rewarding, and exciting.”

WHERE IN THE WORLD...

IN MEMORIAM

William L. Allie, a former Foreign Service Officer, died June 24, 2001, in Brookings, Ore. Allie joined USAID in 1954 and served in Iran, Lebanon (Beirut and Tripoli), Tunisia, Libya, Sudan, Tanzania, Liberia, Vietnam, and USAID/Washington. He received a meritorious award for his dedicated services in Iran. Allie was acting Chief in the Bureau for Africa in USAID/Washington before retiring in 1975.

Edward Caesar, 73, who served as a Logistics Specialist for 13 years with USAID, died in New Orleans August 23, 1999. Caesar worked for USAID in Laos during the 1960s, in Bangladesh just after the war, in the Office of Foreign Service Personnel, and independent, became a foreign service officer.


Hattie Jarmon, 94, died December 30, 2002. She joined USAID's predecessor agency in 1960 and served as Academic Advisor and English Language Officer in the Office of International Training. Jarmon was a leader in facilitating foreign student studies in the United States through her management of a partnership between USAID and the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO). Her work with AACRAO enabled a large number of professionals from developing countries to gain further education and training in the United States. She also helped U.S. college admissions officers advance their understanding of the educational credentials and academic systems of other countries. Jarmon received the Agency's Outstanding Career Achievement Award upon her retirement from USAID in 1992.

Israel Negron, a retired USAID Foreign Service Officer, died December 17, 2002, at home with his family in Guatemala. Negron served as a Controller in Indonesia, Peru, Egypt, and USAID/Washington. Most recently, he was as a Certifying Officer under contract with USAID in Guatemala/Central American programs.


Jack M. Rose, 72, died in February 2002. Rose began his career with USAID’s predecessor agency in 1959 as an Intern in the Controller’s Office. He served as Controller in various USAID missions and then became Area Auditor General in the Middle East, with offices in Pakistan, and Area Auditor General of Central America, with offices in Panama. Rose retired from USAID in 1981.

Samuel Clark Thornburg, 70, died July 15, 1999, at his home in Santa Fe, N.M. Thornburg joined USAID’s predecessor agency in 1956. He served in Bolivia and Nigeria before becoming Deputy Director in the Office of Foreign Service Personnel in Washington in 1965. After attending the College of the Armed Forces and George Washington University, Thornburg returned to USAID in 1966. He served in Vietnam as Deputy Associate Director until 1970, when he returned to Washington and worked as Director of the Office of Management Operations. He retired from USAID in 1978. Thornburg received several career awards, and was presented the Chuong My Medal by the Republic of Vietnam.

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WASHINGTON, D.C.—A pastor who marched with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the civil rights demonstrations of the 1960s told USAID employees about the meaning of the civil rights movement and of the continuing need to “lift one another even if it means danger to our lives.”

The Reverend Dr. Harold A. Carter Sr., pastor of New Shiloh Baptist Church in Baltimore, presented the keynote address to USAID/Washington employees at a commemorative program January 21 in the Ronald Reagan Building amphitheater.

Carter challenged the audience to celebrate King’s legacy by acting to bring Americans together. Many of the issues King faced in the country and in the world—discrimination, greed, war, crime, and abuse of power—are still with us today.

“We must come out of our comfort zones, reach back, reach down, and help somebody,” said Carter.

He challenged the audience to “ask not should I help the brother, but ask what will happen if I don’t help the brother.” A life of service and a commitment to community resonated throughout his keynote message.

Inspector General Everett Mosley told the audience: “Dr. King had the ability to stir your soul with his voice alone. And when you absorb what he said and how he lived his life, that remains a part of our lives even today.”

Mosley thanked King for the hope that he gave and for the direction to put that hope into action. “King had a dream,” he said, “and we must continue to work and strive to reach the pinnacle of that dream when we all can love one another.”

Kent Hill, Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Europe and Eurasia, who was representing Administrator Natsios, related King’s life to the work of international development.

“At USAID, we carry Dr. King’s work forward by helping people take control of their own destinies,” he said.

“USAID is our country’s primary means to extend assistance to countries as they recover from disaster, try to escape poverty, and engage in democratic reforms. With the labor of each and every employee, representing the United States and indeed the world’s diversity, USAID empowers people with the ability to shape their own lives.”

“Ask not should I help the brother, but ask what will happen if I don’t help the brother.”

REVEREND DR. HAROLD A. CARTER SR.
Pastor, New Shiloh Baptist Church, Baltimore

The program began with an audiotaape excerpt of King’s speech, “The Drum Major Instinct,” in which he said, “Everybody can be great because everybody can serve.” This was followed by a rendition of one of King’s favorite songs, “If I Can Help Somebody,” by Sylvia Lankford of the Bureau for Management.

Students from Bailey’s Elementary School for the Arts and Science, Fairfax County, performed dances and songs and gave oratoria presentations saluting King.

The program, cosponsored by the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs and the USAID chapter of Blacks In Government, concluded with employees reading the litany “Let My People Go” in commemoration of King.

By Gloria Blackwell, Office of Equal Opportunity Programs

During the commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday, Inspector General Everett Mosley greets the Reverend Dr. Harold A. Carter Sr., who marched with King in the 1960s.
In one sense, democracy assistance is at the cusp of two challenges, the first of which we have met, and the second of which we need now to tackle. The first challenge was to establish democratic governance as a core element of the development effort in general. Initially, the resistance was formidable.

To many development professionals, inside and outside USAID, democracy programming was not only a misappropriation of scarce resources. It was counterproductive because it entangled development efforts in the internal political life of the host country. It would align us in the political game itself, thereby reinforcing the status quo and undermining the implementation of our initial hypotheses and programming.

The newly reorganized Office of Democracy and Governance (DG) will concentrate on four priorities. First—and most important—is support to missions and bureaus. That is our primary mandate. Second is building a professional DG cadre. Third is working with our bureau colleagues to address the problem of failed and failing states. And fourth is a systematic, rigorous evaluation of democracy assistance of the kind described above.

We believe these four priorities are not mutually exclusive. We will try to serve them together. And we cannot do either unless we review our results continuously and dispassionately. Those results may not always be pleasing to any of us. Some of our most cherished programs may be subject to criticism and revision. But unless we all learn from our experience, we will never improve upon it.

We hope in the next few months to develop a method and a schedule for all four of these priorities—particularly the systematic review—and to enlist the support of our missions and bureaus in all of these efforts.

Gerald F. Hyman is Director of the Office of Democracy and Governance.

In Darkening Pools

JEFFREY ASHLE, WITH HEATHER EVANS

HUMBOA, Angola—I am just back from a field trip to the province of Huамbo located in the central highlands of Angola. There was a landmine accident yesterday outside Huамbo City—one no different from the many thousands this country has experienced in the past 30 years of its bloody war.

Seven people were killed and 15 injured—four critically—on a “cleared” road. They were farmers, peasants, and other poor people looking to support themselves and their children and searching for their daily ration or a daily wage. Perhaps they were innocent people who had never engaged in battle or political confrontation during this unforgettable war. And now they are victims—unequivocally those most affected by this latest violence.

As senseless and tragic as they are, accidents of this nature will continue to occur because millions of mines and unexploded ordnance remain under the earth. Despite the many positive changes since the recent cessation of hostilities and almost universal expectations for a better future, throughout Angola landmines lie in wait to maim and kill, punctuating the dreams and hopes for a war-free nation.

I went to the hospital today to visit the victims of this appalling landmine accident. Besides the frighteningly traumatic amputations and blast injuries characteristic of antipersonnel and antitank mine accidents, I saw the fear embedded in the victims’ eyes—the look of bewilderment and shock.

A badly injured little girl is crying in an all-too-familiar, repetitive, monotonous tone: “Mother it hurts, mother it hurts!” Her anguish is almost too painful to describe. But there is no mother there for her. There is no one to care for and nurture her or to soothe her nightmarish fears except the exhausted, overworked nurses who attend to her wounds periodically throughout the day. This girl is alone in hospital, too young, innocent, and ill-prepared to absorb the enormity and horror of yesterday’s disaster. I touched her face and attempted to smooth her matted, blood-encrusted hair. I tried to calm her wounded soul and body with a simple touch—a palliative, if futile gesture.

To see what landmines do to human beings is to see the worst of man’s inhumanity to man. Yet the anger engendered by the cruelty of such senseless human devastation fuels a desire to work even more passionately to clear these maiming envoys of war. Removing these devices from Angola will undoubtedly reinforce the healing process and rekindle hope for the innocent who suffer most in this dark and beautiful land.

—Jeffrey Ashley was the Director of Projects for USAID/Angola and is currently Regional HIV/AIDS Advisor, REDSO/ESA (Nairobi); Heather Evans is Emergency Disaster Relief Coordinator, USAID/Angola.

New Entry Professional (NEP) Sees Changed World

L. NN Vega

I can still remember the chill that went down my back when I heard that our colleague Larry Foley had been gunned down in Amman, Jordan, in late October. I had never met him, but his death affected me deeply.

Just over a year ago, I and 37 others pledged to protect and defend the constitution as Foreign Service Officers with USAID. We were in the fifth class of New Entry Professionals—NEP V.

Our first day with USAID was September 10, 2001. The next morning, as we signed paper work saying we were available for worldwide service wherever Uncle Sam needed us most, airplanes turned missiles were slamming into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Development and diplomatic priorities began to shift just as we were signing.

The weeks after were filled with bomb threats and anthrax scares. Soon after the U.S. military strikes began in Afghanistan, calls went out for volunteers to serve in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and other critical posts.

As we built up our presence in Afghanistan, other embassies were closed as terror threats and anthrax scares. Soon after the official U.S. military strikes began in Afghanistan, we were in the fifth class of New Entry Professionals—NEP V.

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As we built up our presence in Afghanistan, other embassies were closed as terror plots came to light. Our colleagues were evacuation. Families were separated. People who had once beenjoyed to travel the world with their children were now afraid to put them on the school bus each morning. The Foreign Service world was changing.

Having been a USAID contractor in Central America during the 1990s, I was well aware of the risks faced by our diplomatic corps. But with specialized safety training and preparedness plans, there was always an inherent sense of security.

September 11 changed all the rules. It suddenly became clear that for terrorists there is absolutely no distinction between official Americans and their families. When a grenade thrown into a Christian church in Islamabad in March 2002 killed an embassy spouse and her daughter, I realized that I could be putting my children in harm’s way—even in the places I usually felt the safest overseas.

As the assignment process for my first overseas post was set into motion. My anxiety level escalated.

Prior to September 11, I would have welcomed an assignment to almost any USAID post. But the scary new realities of the post-9/11 world forced me to reevaluate and establish my new comfort zone.

Could I take my boys to the West Bank? How about Egypt? Or Bangladesh? In each of these places, my job would be challenging, but would my children be safe? Was it acceptable for me to jeopardize my family so that I could live my dream of helping my fellow man?

We all wanted to keep our families out of harm’s way, but we joined USAID to make a difference in peoples’ lives and many high-risk countries posed the greatest opportunities to make a difference.

In the end, I was assigned to Kingston, Jamaica, a far cry from Kabul or Islamabad. My boys will have lots of freedom and enjoy island life. But we will remain vigilant because no post is safe in this new world.

Meanwhile two friends took their two daughters to Bangladesh, two others were sent to Indonesia but were evacuated, and another family was issued gas masks and antidotes shortly after their arrival in Tel Aviv. Although I admire their bravery, I could not follow in their footsteps. They are my heroes and I’ll pray for their safety.

Lynn Vega is a Project Development Officer at USAID/Jamaica.

The opinions expressed on this page are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID.
Mission Directors’ Training Receives High Marks

WASHINGTON, D.C.—New mission directors and deputy directors convened January 28–31 for an orientation and training forum that received high marks from participants.

“We see real movement on the Agency’s commitment to provide training on a broad range of issues for senior managers,” said Paul Weisenfeld, Mission Director for Zimbabwe.

The underlying theme of the conference was “What I wish I knew,” tapping key learning from USAID’s most seasoned Foreign Service Officers. Sessions were held on knowing your job, addressing human resource issues, and managing personal stress, and on leadership, strategic planning, business systems transformation, security, good political management, and working with Congress and the media.

Bill Jeffers, Mission Director for Croatia said, “This is a chance to give first-time directors some of the skills handed down over the years as best practices.” He also noted the importance of USAID senior staff attending the Foreign Executive Institute to hone leadership and management skills.

Rita Owens, Project Manager for Executive and Senior Management Training, developed the training program and organized the logistics for the weeklong forum, which included opportunities for dialogue with the Administrator and a host of senior managers and outside experts. One mission director commented, “This training has been the best I have attended in 20 years with USAID. The support (computer lab set-up, hotel and information) was superb. It is evident that much effort and imagination went into conceptualizing, planning, and executing.”

“In addition to the formal training,” said Owen, “we provided time for sharing and socializing so participants could also learn from each other.”

Some new directors wished more time was spent working with the Department of State, and, specifically, with ambassadors. One noted it would be good for USAID to ensure that State’s ambassador training includes a full briefing on USAID as a valuable resource on the country team. Others thought individual consultations and one-on-one sessions would prove useful, especially on difficult personnel issues or for in-depth training on how to improve media relations skills.

“It would have been great to have a second week,” said Michael Yates, Mission Director for the Philippines, “So many of the issues we’re focusing on could be covered in greater depth to the advantage of us all.”

USAID’s FY 2004 Budget Request

WASHINGTON, D.C.—President George W. Bush has requested $8.7 billion in fiscal year 2004 for development and humanitarian assistance administered by USAID. It includes increases in basic education and agriculture, two priority areas for the administration.

Increases in funding for HIV/AIDS and the Famine Fund, recently announced by the President, are not reflected in the budget summary shown here. USAID receives funds from several accounts: Child Survival and Health ($1.495 billion), Development Assistance ($1.345 billion), International Disaster Assistance ($236 million), Transition Initiatives ($55 million) and PL 480 Food for Peace ($1.185 billion).

The accounts of Support for East European Democracies ($435 million) and FREEDOM Support Act ($576 million) fund programs in Europe and Eurasia and are jointly managed with the Department of State, while Economic Support Funds ($2.535 billion) finance programs administered by USAID at the State Department’s request.

The budget request builds on USAID’s programmatic pillars: Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance; Economic Growth; and Global Health. Global Development Alliance, USAID’s fourth pillar, will receive $15 million to mobilize alliances with and resources from the U.S. public and private sectors.

USAID received funds from several accounts: Child Survival and Health ($1.495 billion), Development Assistance ($1.345 billion), International Disaster Assistance ($236 million), Transition Initiatives ($55 million) and PL 480 Food for Peace ($1.185 billion).