



Administrator's Message

We live in a world where the most immediate threats to the United States are global problems that respect no borders. Poverty, hunger, disease, oppression, rapid population growth, environmental damage, and the spread of conflicts from failed states increasingly affect the affairs of nations around the world.

The mission of the U.S. Agency for International Development is to support the people of developing and transitional countries in their efforts to achieve economic and social stability. Since 1961, USAID has been helping people help themselves, while advancing America's interests and foreign policy objectives around the world. We have been a leader and innovator, pioneering research and development to improve health conditions, protect the environment, promote economic growth, build human capacity, support democracy, and provide humanitarian assistance. But our work is not done.

The end of the Cold War brought new challenges that require a renewed foreign assistance program and a more efficient and effective USAID to administer it. To meet this challenge, the Agency embarked upon an extensive reform program. Today, we have taken important steps to create an Agency that is increasingly efficient, results oriented, and able to advance an integrated, strategic approach to development.

We have refocused our objectives and developed a clearly articulated set of development strategies. USAID's

strategic plan supports specific U.S. national interests as defined in the *International Affairs Strategic Plan*, a document USAID and the Department



of State worked in close collaboration to prepare.

USAID is committed to managing for results and to implementing the Government Performance and Results Act. The Agency's results reporting system is not yet where we would like it to be. This is not surprising, given the lack of timely, comprehensive, and quality data about developing countries. However, we believe that it provides USAID managers and our stakeholders an increasingly reliable basis for assessing our progress against objectives.

We have a clear vision of an integrated management information system that will meet our needs into the 21st

century and improve compliance with financial management and other system requirements. We have dedicated our information technology resources for this year and next to completing year 2000 repairs, replacing the core accounting system, and ensuring that the current systems will support Agency operations until new systems are in place. Our new chief financial officer is working closely with the chief information officer to ensure that the financial management system will support the Agency's business needs and will work properly with other systems that will be improved or replaced.

This fiscal year 1998 Accountability Report highlights our accomplishments as well as our setbacks and challenges. Our accomplishments reflect our commitment to achieving the best possible development results from our investments. We are confident that the changes that have taken place and are under way will improve accountability and put us in an increasingly better position to demonstrate results.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "J. Brian Atwood". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

—J. BRIAN ATWOOD
Administrator

U.S. Agency for International Development