

The Challenge

The key objective of the Belarus program is to increase citizen participation in democratic practices. The lack of government commitment to democratization and free-market economic development, as well as a hostile environment to almost all foreign assistance are the main impediments toward achieving this objective. This hostility is expressed in the closure of U.S. PVOs implementing USAID programs, harassment of local non-governmental organizations, and further regulation of international assistance, all of which makes it very difficult to register programs in democracy and governance. To address these challenges, USAID has increased programming in the democracy area using Supplemental funds, while simultaneously expanding activities into the areas of health and social transition as an alternative way of civil society development. USAID launched new activities addressing HIV/AIDS, Orphans and Vulnerable Children, prevention of Trafficking in Persons, and economic education.

Objectives, Sectors and Workforce

Mission Director: Earl Gast

MCA Status: Currently Not Eligible

PEPFAR Focus Country: No

Provided or Received Services From Other Missions: Received

Program Budget (Appropriations by Objective)	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	Percent Change FY 04-07	2005 SO Performance Score		Direct SO Admin. Cost Ratio
	(\$000)	(\$000)	(\$000)	(\$000)				
113-0210 Citizen Participation in Democratic Practices	5,588	6,780	7,984	7,172	28.3%	0.89	Not Met	0.06
Transfer to Other US Government Agency	2,455	5,366	3,500	2,828	15.2%			
Country Total	8,043	12,146	11,484	10,000	24.3%			

Program Budget (Appropriations by Account)

	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	Percent Change FY 04-07
	(\$000)	(\$000)	(\$000)	(\$000)	
FREEDOM Support Act	8,043	12,146	11,484	10,000	24.3%
Total	8,043	12,146	11,484	10,000	24.3%

Program Budget by Sector and Account

	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	Percent Change FY 04-07
	(\$000)	(\$000)	(\$000)	(\$000)	
Agriculture and Environment FSA	0	0	100	0	N/A
Higher Education & Training FSA	900	0	0	0	N/A
Economic Growth FSA	444	517	1,742	1,235	178.2%
Human Rights FSA	700	297	0	0	N/A
Democracy and Governance FSA	4,650	10,582	8,048	8,363	79.8%
Conflict Management / Humanitarian Assistance FSA	500	400	470	402	-19.6%
HIV / AIDS FSA	849	310	0	0	N/A
Child Survival and Maternal Health FSA	0	0	624	0	N/A
Vulnerable Children FSA	0	40	0	0	N/A
Other Infectious Diseases FSA	0	0	500	0	N/A
Total	8,043	12,146	11,484	10,000	24.3%

Workforce

	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	Percent Change FY 04-07
US Direct Hires	0	1	1	1	N/A
US Non Direct Hires	0	0	0	0	N/A
Foreign Nationals	5	5	5	5	0.0%
Total	5	6	6	6	20.0%

Operating Expense

	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	Percent Change FY 04-07
	(\$000)	(\$000)	(\$000)	(\$000)	
Salaries and benefits	0	0	63	63	N/A
Travel	0	0	41	37	N/A
Transportation of things	0	0	0	0	N/A
Rent	0	0	22	22	N/A
Security	0	0	0	0	N/A
Equipment	0	0	0	0	N/A
ICASS - Operating Expense only	0	0	58	62	N/A
Other Operating Expense	0	0	6	6	N/A
Total OE Budget	0	0	190	190	N/A
US direct hire salary and benefits	0	0	126	140	N/A
Program Funded Administrative Expenses				230	
Country Total Administrative Budget				560	
Percent of Bureau OE Total				0.5%	

Mission Summary

FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
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Program per US Direct Hire (\$000)	N/A	12,146	11,484	10,000
Program per All US (\$000)	N/A	12,146	11,484	10,000
Program per Position (\$000)	1,609	2,024	1,914	1,667
Operating Expense as % of Program Funding				1.9%
Program Funded Admin Expense as % of Total Admin				41.1%
Total Admin Expense as % of Program Funding				5.6%

Other Major Donors:

Bilateral: Sweden, Switzerland

Multilateral: United Nations, World Bank, European Commission.

**Belarus
PROGRAM SUMMARY**

(in thousands of dollars)

Accounts	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006 Current	FY 2007 Request
FREEDOM Support Act	8,043	7,146	11,484	10,000
FSA FY 2005 Supplemental	0	5,000	0	0
Total Program Funds	8,043	12,146	11,484	10,000

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE SUMMARY				
113-0210 Citizen Participation in Democratic Practices				
FSA	5,588	4,605	7,984	7,172
FSA FY 2005 Supplemental	0	2,175	0	0

TRANSFER				
FSA	2,455	2,541	3,500	2,828
FSA FY 2005 Supplemental	0	2,825	0	0

Mission Director,
Earl Gast

Data Sheet

USAID Mission:	Belarus
Program Title:	Citizen Participation in Democratic Practices
Pillar:	Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance
Strategic Objective:	113-0210
Status:	Continuing
Planned FY 2006 Obligation:	\$7,984,000 FSA
Prior Year Unobligated:	\$966,000 FSA
Proposed FY 2007 Obligation:	\$7,172,000 FSA
Year of Initial Obligation:	1999
Estimated Year of Final Obligation:	2006

Summary: The USAID program aims to increase citizen participation in civil society, strengthen democratic political processes, develop independent media, and support civil initiatives addressing the broader social needs of Belarusians.

Inputs, Outputs, Activities:

FY 2006 Program:

Address Other Health Vulnerabilities (\$500,000 FSA). USAID will address the needs of orphans and vulnerable children by reducing the number of children dependent on state-administered orphanages and boarding schools for services. Chernobyl Rehabilitation CORE Program will assist Belarusians in the most affected areas in fighting the effects of the Chernobyl nuclear accident. The focus will be on independent information and education on radiation levels, environment, and health. Implementers: Christian Children's Fund and United Nations Development Program (both prime).

Establish and Ensure Media Freedom and Freedom of Information (\$1,604,000 FSA, \$396,000 FSA carryover). Assistance focuses on strengthening media capacity to provide Belarusian citizens with objective, unbiased information. Implementer: Contractor: International Research and Exchanges Board.

Improve Economic Policy and the Business Environment (\$1,550,000 FSA). USAID will provide unbiased economic information and accounting training, and foster development of small and medium businesses through business education, entrepreneurship training, policy dialogue, and access to market and finance. It will also expand micro and small enterprise lending operations through the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). Implementer: Development Alternatives Inc. (prime) and TBD.

Prevent and Control Infectious Diseases of Major Importance (\$500,000 FSA). Funds will be used to develop a project to improve diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis (TB). Implementer: TBD.

Program Support (\$395,000 FSA, \$73,359 FSA carryover, \$3,977 FSA prior year recoveries). Funds will support program administration and development, including strategy design, needs and sector assessments in selected sectors.

Strengthen Civil Society (\$2,605,000 FSA, \$172,260 FSA carryover supplemental). USAID will advance civil society development by providing technical and financial support to local civil society, media and human rights non-government organizations (NGOs). USAID will promote rule of law by training local lawyers, activists, and NGOs. It will work with faculty-based legal clinics at local universities to build the capacity of clinical programs at law schools. The Community Connections program will provide Belarusian entrepreneurs, professionals, and NGO leaders with valuable exchange opportunities to break the increasing self-isolation of the country, and promote mutual understanding through exposure to U.S. society. The European Humanities University International (EHUI) will receive assistance for the education of university students in Belarus. Currently, EHUI is operating "in exile" in Vilnius, primarily through distance learning, due to the Belarus government's closure of the university campus in Belarus. Implementers: American Bar Association/Central European and Eurasian Law Initiative (ABA/CEELI), Eurasia Foundation (EF), PACT, German Marshall Fund, World Learning, and EHU (all prime).

Strengthen Democratic Political Parties (\$830,000 FSA, \$320,000 FSA carryover). Support will be provided to develop political party-building, campaign planning and management, media relations and coalition building skills. Implementers: International Republican Institute (IRI) and National Democratic Institute (NDI) - both prime.

FY 2007 Program:

Establish and Ensure Media Freedom and Freedom of Information (\$1,000,000 FSA). Assistance will focus on strengthening media capacity to provide Belarusian citizens with objective unbiased information. Implementer: Contractor/grantee: International Research and Exchanges Board

Improve Economic Policy and the Business Environment (\$1,100,000 FSA). USAID will support the sustainability and competitiveness of the private sector through business education, entrepreneurship training, improvement of the regulatory framework, and access to market and finance and will expand micro and small enterprise lending operations. Private business activities will be supported through grant-making. Implementer: EBRD, EF (both prime) and TBD.

Program Support (\$317,740 FSA). Program support will fund program administration and development costs, including sector assessments and project evaluations.

Strengthen Civil Society (\$3,954,260 FSA). USAID will expand the civil society program through NGO development and provide basic support to independent media through professional training for non-state media managers, publishers, and journalists. A Community Connections program tailored to Belarusian professional or business interests will contribute to Belarusian economic and democratic reform. Implementers: PACT and World Learning (both prime).

Strengthen Democratic Political Parties (\$800,000 FSA). USAID will work with pro-democracy political parties and groups. USAID will continue a long-term capacity-building program for pro-democracy parties, with a focus on internal governance, party-building, and membership recruitment. Implementers: IRI and NDI (both prime).

Performance and Results: Eleven local grant projects were successfully implemented despite the Government of Belarus refusal to re-register USAID's implementing organization for the Civil Society Strengthening Project, and the closure of its representative office. The project worked with 18 local communities (total population of about 1,270,000 people) and 30 civil society organizations (approximately 3,500 active members). USAID developed a web site for NGOs, a valuable resource on current NGO legal regulations. USAID assisted in conducting a roundtable for 70 NGO lawyers on rendering legal aid in a new working environment. The EF awarded over \$180,000 for civil society and private enterprise development, and public administration. The Belarus Economic Education Project provided unbiased economic information and trained several groups of professionals, predominantly representing the private sector, in accounting, financial, managerial accounting, tax, and law. In total, 105 examinees took part in the first exams on financial accounting and managerial accounting.

In 2005, the government persisted with its policy of controlling alternative viewpoints and information sources, imposing fines and limiting the distribution system of independent publications. Despite the worsening environment, USAID was successful in keeping independent newspapers running through the provision of emergency grants and technical assistance. The program provided such widely used technical resources for journalists as the PhotoService, News Archives and the Press Dossier. Due to the independent media's increased professionalism in providing objective and quality information, the level of public trust to the independent media continues to be high.

US Financing in Thousands of Dollars

Belarus

113-0210 Citizen Participation in Democratic Practices	ESF	FSA
Through September 30, 2004		
Obligations	464	34,000
Expenditures	396	31,671
Unliquidated	68	2,329
Fiscal Year 2005		
Obligations	0	9,511
Expenditures	59	2,877
Through September 30, 2005		
Obligations	464	43,511
Expenditures	455	34,548
Unliquidated	9	8,963
Prior Year Unobligated Funds		
Obligations	0	966
Planned Fiscal Year 2006 NOA		
Obligations	0	7,984
Total Planned Fiscal Year 2006		
Obligations	0	8,950
Proposed Fiscal Year 2007 NOA		
Obligations	0	7,172
Future Obligations	0	0
Est. Total Cost	464	59,633