

# FRONT LINES



www.usaid.gov

U.S. Agency for International Development Employee News

JANUARY 2004

**“We are a proud people.... We have a very important legacy, but we are also keen to learn from other nations, including the United States.”**



AP WWP Photo

MIKHAIL SAKASHVILI,  
Georgia's New President,  
At his Inauguration in Tbilisi, Georgia,  
January 25, 2004

## Congress Gives \$1 Billion for MCA

The Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), President Bush's new foreign aid program, was launched January 23 when Congress provided an initial \$1 billion in the FY 2004 Consolidated Appropriations Bill.

Called the largest increase in foreign aid by the United States or any other country in decades, the MCA is expected to grow in the next 2-3 years and reach \$5 billion annually.

▼ SEE MCA ON PAGE 2

PRSRT STD  
Postage and Fees  
Paid USAID  
Permit No. G-107

U.S. Agency for International Development  
Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs  
Washington, D.C. 20523-6100

Penalty for Private Use \$300  
Official Business

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

## Agency's FY 2004 Budget Is \$10.2 Billion

The FY 2004 budget, signed January 23, provides USAID with \$10.2 billion, which includes supplemental funding and a record \$1 billion to be managed by USAID as part of an administration initiative to fight HIV/AIDS worldwide.

Total USAID spending will be even higher, as the Coalition Provisional Authority determines what share to assign USAID from the \$18.6 billion Iraq and Afghan reconstruction supplemental bill that Congress approved October 2003.

Out of that supplemental fund, USAID has already awarded up to \$1.8 billion to Bechtel for the second Iraq infrastructure contract.

In 2003, supplemental bills for reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan pushed the Agency's overall budget to \$14.2 billion.

Overall, U.S. government spending on HIV/AIDS in the 2004 budget has doubled to more than \$2 billion. USAID will manage roughly half that amount.

Some \$516 million is put toward AIDS under the Child Survival and Health Programs Fund. Another \$400 million will be contributed to the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and an additional \$40 million will come from other accounts. In coordination with the Department of State, the Agency will also manage \$488 million for the new Global AIDS Initiative.

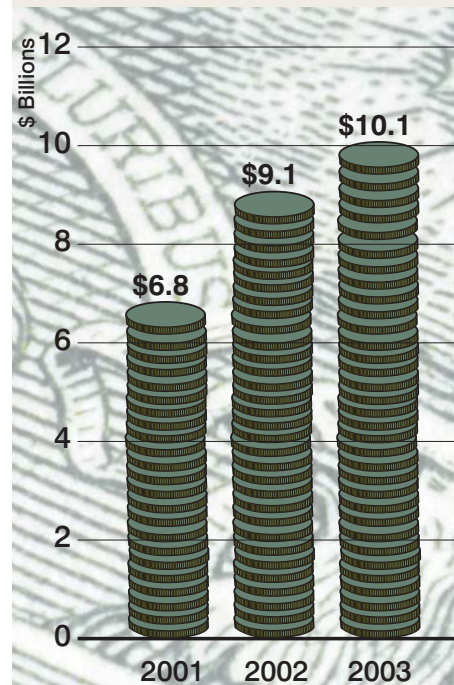
In 2004, the administrative budget is up from \$676 million to \$782 million.

The additional funds will enable the Agency to launch the Development Readiness Initiative, a staffing plan that allows USAID to hire more foreign service employees.

“This plan allows us to not only replace all those who are expected to retire in 2004 but to hire approximately 50 more people, so that we can begin rebuilding the capacity of the Agency to handle its growing program management responsibilities,” said Supervisory Budget Analyst James Painter.

▼ SEE BUDGET ON PAGE 2

### TOTAL USAID OBLIGATIONS, FY 2001-03



Source: USAID Combined Statement of Budgetary Resources

## Bechtel Gets \$1.8 Billion Contract

The Bechtel National Corporation of San Francisco has been awarded a second contract, worth up to \$1.8 billion, to repair the infrastructure of Iraq over the next 24 months, USAID officials announced January 6.

Bechtel, which teamed up with Parsons of California in its winning offer, is currently completing nearly \$1 billion worth of work in Iraq for USAID under the first infrastructure contract, awarded April 2003.

For the first contract, the Agency faced criticism in the press and on Capitol Hill for inviting only seven firms to compete in order to speed the process. Four firms submitted proposals. Ironically, while the second contract was competed openly, only three companies applied, said procurement office head Tim Beans.

Under preliminary plans, the lion's share of the money—\$1.075 billion—will be used to repair the antiquated and neglected Iraqi electricity system.

Water and sanitation will get \$210 million, surface transportation \$109 million, building programs \$90 million, airports

▼ SEE BECHTEL ON PAGE 2

### A MONGOLIAN HERDER AND CHILD



Jonathan Addleton, USAID/Mongolia

Xaan Bank, the largest rural bank in Mongolia, directly targets herder families such as this one.

SEE MONGOLIA ON PAGE 9

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

UKRAINE  
LAND TITLE  
PROGRAM

PAGE 9



Iran Earthquake ..... 5  
2003 Retirees ..... 6-7  
Honduran Dairy ..... 8  
Where in the World ..... 11



GUATEMALA  
ARCHEOLOGY

PAGE 12



## Relief Is Coming for Beleaguered Procurement Staff

The doubling of the Agency's budget since 2001 and the huge workload increase due to reconstruction programs in Iraq and Afghanistan has led USAID's Office of Acquisitions and Assistance to move personnel around the globe and ask some officers to delay their vacations.

At the urging of Administrator Andrew S. Natsios, the office is also speeding up efforts to purchase a joint procurement system used by USAID and the Department of State to draw up and award contracts and grants.

Because contracting officers are so busy with Iraq and Afghanistan procurements, foreign service nationals (FSNs) from USAID missions have been brought to Washington, D.C., to keep procurement actions flowing. This fiscal year alone, 12 FSN contracting specialists have served 6–8 weeks each at USAID headquarters.

To award the first \$160 million under the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, contracting officers agreed to work over the

holidays and take their "use or lose" leave next year.

Chief Acquisitions Officer Tim Beans said such measures enabled the Agency to double its usual volume of funding in 2003, and award funds in record time from the \$18.5 billion second supplemental budget for Iraq.

But the office is "hitting the wall" of what it can do without additional resources, Beans warned.

In 2004, the Agency will hire up to 14 new entry professionals (NEPs) to replace retiring contract officers in the field.

The procurement office also has authority to hire seven personal service contractors to supplement its staff of 123.

Beans said he will approach retired foreign service officers about those positions. In addition, Beans hopes to recruit recent college graduates.

"It's cheaper to hire previously trained people, but the procurement profession is woefully short of such people," said Beans,

who plans to speak at schools that offer coursework in procurement, including the University of Virginia and George Washington University.

Jay Bergman, a retired procurement officer, has agreed to mentor NEPs to get them ready for their first overseas assignments.

In the past, the Agency has paired up new hires with seasoned officers in the field for 2–4 years before sending them to a posting, but this luxury is no longer possible, Beans said.

Another office priority will be to identify other reforms that enable the office to handle large funding increases.

The Agency is working closely with the Department of State on a joint procurement system that will be ready for use in Washington, D.C., by 2005. Installing the new system in missions will be coordinated with the worldwide deployment of Phoenix, the Agency's new accounting system. ★

## Lawyer Defends Iraq Contract

USAID properly followed federal laws when awarding multimillion dollar contracts to firms doing reconstruction work in Iraq, says the Agency's chief procurement counsel.

USAID was criticized for not fully competing contracts, "shopping in secret," awarding contracts based on political bias, and improperly excluding non-U.S. firms from the list of contractors invited to bid.

But Jeffrey Marburg-Goodman, a 12-year Agency veteran, defended USAID in an article published in the fall 2003 issue of *Procurement Lawyer*, a quarterly American Bar Association publication.

The attorney described the advertising and bidding process used for USAID contracts. Typically, the process takes six to eight months. For Iraq reconstruction, however, the Agency exercised an authority provided by the U.S. Federal Acquisition Regulation—the federal purchasing code—which allows it to act quickly for urgent tasks such as keeping schools and hospitals running and repairing the country's infrastructure.

The many companies that were awarded contracts were chosen legally, Marburg-Goodman wrote. He argued that the award to Bechtel "was in no way a 'rigged' or predetermined outcome, and the American taxpayer reaped substantial savings from a process in which the bidder with the highest technical rating also bid the lowest cost."

Marburg-Goodman addressed the "political bias" allegations by exploring the merits of the contractors. All solicited firms were veteran development actors with highly trained staff and the required resources to carry out complex projects.

The panel that chose Bechtel—the contractor that won the largest portion of the bids—was made up of two engineers, one physical scientist, one regional planner, and one contracting officer, all nonpolitical employees, Marburg-Goodman noted.

Lastly, he points out that the U.S. Congress has long expressed its strong preference that U.S. firms be used when taxpayer dollars are at stake.

"The procurement decisions...were managed by USAID career professionals and, in hindsight, there is probably not a single internal policy decision we would have made differently." ★

[www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov) Keyword Iraq

## Bechtel Gets New Iraq Contract Worth Up to \$1.8 Billion

▲ FROM PAGE 1

\$116 million, ports \$50 million, and infrastructure-related support to Iraqi ministries \$25 million.

The total program cost will be \$1.675 billion, without overhead and management costs.

The new contract was the first awarded from the \$18.5 billion supplemental budget for Iraq reconstruction approved by Congress in October 2003.

The Coalition Provisional Authority has been given authority to hand out about \$5 billion more in Iraq reconstruction contracts, but will not complete these procurements until a new government is in place.

Beans, briefing journalists at USAID headquarters, referred to "the ideal situation in government contracting": the firm with the lowest bid was the one with the highest score on its technical plans to carry out the work. "I was very surprised at the reasonableness of Bechtel's fee," Beans added.

The primary contract to carry out the



Thomas Hartwell, USAID  
Repair work at the Al-Mamoun telephone exchange, Baghdad. Bechtel has been working with the Iraqi Telephone and Postal Company to restore telephone service.

infrastructure projects was limited to U.S. firms. However, Bechtel's subcontractors can be from Iraq, the United States, or any other country—except for those facing U.S. sanctions, such as Iran, Cuba, and North Korea.

Bechtel said it will try to employ as many Iraqis as possible on the contract and will meet or exceed the requirement to contract with small businesses owned by the disadvantaged, women, veterans, or service-disabled veterans. ★

## U.S. Prepares for Cuba's Transition

When the Cuban dictatorship led by Fidel Castro crumbles, U.S. officials will be prepared to prevent the humanitarian emergency that could be sparked by disorder, a conference on Cuban transition was told January 16.

A future transition government in Cuba should initially discourage internal population movements, which expose people to high risks of violence, communicable disease, and malnutrition, said Administrator Andrew S. Natsios.

The transition government should also encourage relief organizations to work with emerging local institutions or churches to design programs that lead toward long-term development and reflect well on the new government.

The technical part of the conference focused on saving lives—health and food security—and reducing humanitarian suffering in the early stage of any transition.

The Agency and the University of Miami's Cuba Transition Project hosted the conference in the Ronald Reagan Building in Washington, D.C. In addition to Natsios, speakers included Assistant Secretary of State Roger Noriega, Assistant Administrator Adolfo Franco, and Presidential Envoy Otto Reich.

University panelists included experts from Columbia, Johns Hopkins, Georgetown, Tulane, Miami, and Florida. Other speakers came from World Vision, Casals and Associates, Miami-Dade County's Center of Emergency Management, Creative Associates International, and Evangelical Christian Humanitarian Outreach.

The conference followed President Bush's announcement in October 2003 that he was creating the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba. The Commission is chaired by Secretary of State Colin L. Powell. ★

## MCA Is Funded

▲ FROM PAGE 1

The MCA will support countries that can best benefit from foreign aid because of their commitment to good government, including fighting corruption, promoting free markets, and supporting health and education programs for their citizens.

Under the appropriations bill, the MCA will be run by the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), whose board is chaired by the Secretary of State and includes the USAID Administrator.

The act empowers the USAID inspector general as the inspector general for the MCC, who may "conduct reviews, investigations, and inspections of all aspects of the operations and activities of the corporation." The act also authorizes up to \$5 million a year to cover the cost of these activities.

The Agency is also helping the MCC produce its online or web presence. ★

[www.mca.gov](http://www.mca.gov)

## Agency's Budget

▲ FROM PAGE 1

The Agency will directly manage some \$6.8 billion in various program accounts, including \$1.8 billion for Child Survival and Health, \$1.4 billion for Development Assistance, \$335 million for International Disaster and Famine Assistance, \$55 million for Transition Initiatives, and \$1.2 billion in P.L. 480 food aid. All of these accounts are funded at levels comparable to FY 2003.

USAID and the Department of State will jointly manage nearly \$4.3 billion, including \$3 billion in Economic Support Funds and \$228 million for the Andean Counterdrug Initiative.

About \$1 billion in aid is going to former Soviet republics, Eastern Europe, and the Baltic States—a decrease from FY 2003's nearly \$1.3 billion. ★



## FIRST PERSON



Jan Howard, USAID/Nicaragua

Ulises Gonzalez and his sister, Martha Justina Gonzalez, own a dairy in the mountainous northern region of Nicaragua. He is general manager; she runs the laboratory and monitors quality. With help from USAID, Lacteos Santa Martha has been improving hygiene, quality control, and processing methods. The family-run dairy is now FDA-certified to export its products to the United States.

**“It really is worth the trouble to do things well. I have a product that I know people want. It’s a product that I am proud to put my name on because the quality of my product will match any competition.”**

ULISES GONZALEZ  
CO-OWNER AND GENERAL MANAGER,  
LACTEOS SANTA MARTHA,  
NICARAGUA

## Notes from Natsios

★★★★★★★



## MANAGING CONFLICT

Conflict and violence affect nearly two-thirds of the countries where USAID works. Nepal, Uganda, Sri Lanka, Burundi, Nigeria, Georgia, and Iraq are only a few examples. As a result, we must learn to carry out our work in these unstable and sometimes volatile places.

We need to do a better job of assessing vulnerability to violent conflict. Our biggest challenge is to think more strategically about how to address conflict, its causes, and consequences; we must do more than treat the symptoms.

In April 2002, I created the Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM) to serve as the Agency’s agent for change—to help missions, development officers, and our partners develop the expertise we need to plot and carry out strategy for high-risk environments.

I’m pleased to report that CMM has launched an ambitious yet achievable agenda, helping us understand and respond to conflict. Soon, I will authorize the release of the Agency’s new conflict policy, which is part of the larger initiative to identify ways we should deal with fragile states.

I want to be clear. CMM, set up within the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance, is not going to develop a whole new set of conflict activities. CMM will assist the Agency by making conflict programming part of our assistance portfolios.

How are they doing this?

- ◆ First, CMM is working with other U.S. agencies and academic experts to develop early or strategic warning methods to help identify political instability or other negative trends before they become a front-page crisis.
- ◆ Second, CMM is working closely with many missions to better understand what may drive violence in a country. For these missions, wrestling with conflict or postconflict scenarios, CMM is offering guidance and advice on tailoring a portfolio to mitigate, manage, or respond to the issue at hand. In Nepal, CMM is helping the mission use aid to deal with causes and consequences of the Maoist insurgency, aiding conflict-affected communities and supporting national government moves toward a peaceful resolution. CMM has also been working with the Nigeria mission to help disenfranchised, alienated young people find constructive forms of economic, political, and social engagement. In Burundi, CMM is addressing problems linked to questions of land ownership and land rights.
- ◆ CMM has deployed multidisciplinary teams to assess conflict in 20 countries where USAID works. The teams identify destabilizing patterns and then recommend new strategies or programs

## Mission of the Month

## HAITI

## The Challenge

In the past decade, Haiti has been overwhelmed by health problems related to poverty and disease. It is the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, and has the worst health indicators in the Caribbean region.

Haiti also has the worst HIV/AIDS epidemic in the Americas. The pandemic has ravaged the island nation of 8 million and is the main cause of death among women of reproductive age.

Poor health is compounded by a deteriorating economy and an escalating political crisis marked by civil unrest. Compromised parliamentary elections in 2000 prompted many donors to stop aid to the Haitian government, reducing aid overall. Weak public health services and poor infrastructure make it a Herculean task to deliver health care.

## Innovative USAID Response

With an annual budget of almost \$20 million, the mission’s health program addresses the country’s most pressing health concerns: malnutrition, child mortality, reproductive health, and HIV/AIDS.

Since 1982, USAID/Haiti has invested millions of dollars into a network of NGOs that provide basic health care. The mission’s main contractor, Management Sciences for Health (MSH), gives technical assistance and grants to 30 local and international NGOs. The NGOs, in turn, train hundreds of healthcare workers, hold workshops for rural midwives, send medical professionals on field visits, and produce educational literature. The network’s 155 service delivery points follow Ministry of Health standards throughout the country.

USAID does not directly finance the public health system, but funds channeled through NGOs support some training, equipment, and supplies for public healthcare.

Prenatal care, postnatal care, and management of complications during pregnancy have also been priorities. Another focus has been preventing diarrhea, fever, respiratory infections, measles, and malnutrition in children.

But no disease is receiving more attention than AIDS. Haiti is one of the 14 countries targeted by President Bush’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and the International Mother and Child HIV Prevention Initiative.

USAID allocated \$4.75 million to fighting HIV/AIDS in Haiti in 2003. Another \$3 million went to preventing mother-to-child HIV transmission.

Increased funding has been used for educational campaigns targeting youth and community care for orphans, vulnerable children, and people living with HIV/AIDS. USAID is also working with HIV/AIDS research groups,

the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, and Haiti’s Ministry of Health to establish a national network of 70 voluntary testing sites. Almost 25,000 pregnant women have been tested for HIV/AIDS.

## Results

One-third of Haiti’s population now has access to health care because of U.S. assistance. And, arguably, all Haitians have better healthcare because of U.S. technical support to the private and public sectors.

In 2003, immunization rates of 87 percent in USAID-funded areas averaged more than twice the national rate of 34 percent.

Infant mortality nationwide—the focus of much donor attention—has dropped since 1987, from 101 to 80 deaths per 1,000 infants. In part, this is due to the public-private partnership approach sponsored by USAID in child survival, which targets immunizations, oral rehydration therapy, nutrition programs, and other basic services.

Assistant Administrator for Global Health Dr. E. Anne Peterson said: “Haiti is not doing business as usual. They’ve done a really superb job, especially in getting urgently needed new services to pregnant mothers to protect their babies from HIV.”

The mission’s health program is being replicated. Recently, advisors from MSH in Haiti were invited to Afghanistan to help design a similar program there.

“USAID assistance has helped make the difference—between a basic but functioning healthcare system in parts of the country and the virtual disintegration of the health sector for more than 20 years,” said Haiti Mission Director David Adams. ★

[www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov) Keyword: Haiti



A toddler is weighed to screen for malnutrition, a priority of USAID/Haiti’s health program.



## ECONOMIC GROWTH, AGRICULTURE, AND TRADE

## Foreign Aid Addresses Climate Change



Leila Mead, IISD

The Ninth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was held in Milan, Italy, December 2003. A large U.S. delegation, headed by Paula Dobriansky, Undersecretary for Global Affairs, Department of State, included Deputy Assistant Administrator Jacqueline Schafer, Ko Barrett, and Duane Muller from USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade.

Helping developing countries cut greenhouse emissions with new technologies and improve their ability to adapt to climate change is a critical part of U.S. efforts to address global climate change. In FY 2004, USAID's climate change budget reached \$180 million.

Many developing countries are likely to experience climate change effects such as drought, rising sea levels, epidemics, and dying coral reefs.

In December 2003, the U.S. government sent an interagency delegation that included senior representatives from USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade (EGAT) to the annual meeting of the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Milan, Italy.

Currently, 188 countries are parties to the UNFCCC, adopted in 1994, whose goal is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations at levels that won't upset the earth's climate system and threaten its inhabitants.

Delegates discussed how to implement the Kyoto Protocol, which, if ratified, would require signatories to reduce emissions by at least 5 percent by 2012. The protocol will go into effect once it is ratified by 55 countries that account for 55 percent of global warming emissions.

The United States does not support the Kyoto Protocol for a variety of reasons, but participated in the discussions to ensure U.S. interests were addressed.

Under Secretary of State Paula Dobriansky, the U.S. delegation leader, said governments should work together with the private sector to transfer technology to help developing countries reduce emissions.

"International technology partnerships are an example of cooperation that is tailored to meet technology goal, such as the

transition to the hydrogen economy," said Dobriansky.

U.S. foreign aid for global climate change is funded primarily through USAID.

A six-person EGAT climate change team, led by Ko Barrett, helps missions carry out climate change activities in more than 40 countries.

The goal is to reduce the growth of greenhouse gas emissions, increase "carbon sinks" (such as forests that absorb carbon emissions), and facilitate participation of developing countries in UNFCCC.

Recently, adaptation to climate change was added to the program's portfolio.

Key ways USAID is involved in climate change include:

- ◆ Improving energy efficiency, using renewable energy such as hydropower, or publicizing clean energy technologies so the private sector can adopt them.
- ◆ Promoting carbon sequestration (trapping carbon in trees and plant life) through reforestation, forest conservation, and ending poor agricultural practices such as burning fields; these actions help keep carbon out of the air.
- ◆ Setting up an office to serve as a focal point on climate change issues—such as the one USAID helped the Ukrainian government establish—or helping draw up an inventory of emissions and energy and land use, as USAID and the Environmental Protection Agency are doing in Central America.
- ◆ Studying and anticipating changes that alter temperature and precipitation. These affect USAID programs, especially those relating to water and agriculture.★

[www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov) Keyword: Climate Change

## GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

## GlobalGiving Makes It Easy to Donate Aid

A man in Washington, D.C., browsed through GlobalGiving.com, a development website. A project offering information technology training to handicapped people caught his attention.

He thought about donating, figured out his budget, and gave.

A few weeks later he received a 20-second video that showed Cambodians with disabilities working on computers that his money had helped purchase.

This is the kind of direct connection GlobalGiving generates between donor and recipient, cutting out the multiple bureaucratic steps typically involved in development aid.

GlobalGiving was founded in 2001. USAID's Global Development Alliance (GDA) liked the model well enough to contribute \$500,000 toward the website's startup costs.

The grant is managed by USAID's Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation.

"The GlobalGiving alliance puts the Agency in an interesting new place," said GDA Director Holly Wise. "It is a great opportunity for us to help create this new marketplace and, through it, to enhance the impact of our foreign assistance investments."

The scale of projects listed on GlobalGiving varies dramatically, as do the contributions that people, organizations, and businesses choose to give.

The site lists more than 250 projects in 54 countries. Some take \$2,000 to implement,

others \$200,000. A project can be as simple as building a latrine for a community in South Asia, as complicated as creating a microfinance institution for small businesses in Zimbabwe, or as unusual as supporting a missing children's network throughout Latin America.

Projects on the site can be searched by subject—such as environment, gender, and human rights—or by region.

Each month a special project is featured. The January theme is small business, spotlighting the Yochin Tayel K'injal Coffee Cooperative in Mexico. It is seeking \$3,450 in donations to further its goals of offering an alternative marketplace for small coffee farmers and fostering economic independence for indigenous people in the state of Chiapas.

In a sense, GlobalGiving is an online forum that acts as an "e-Bay" for international aid, said Wise.

"It can extend the reach of work Agency staff have been doing in relating to diaspora communities in the U.S. and elsewhere, and can connect development opportunities with corporate employee giving programs in a very direct and targeted way," she said.

Partners in this alliance, along with USAID, include Visa International, Hewlett-Packard, and the Skoll, Omidyar, Hewlett, Kellogg, and Mott foundations.

GlobalGiving has nine employees, and is based in Bethesda, Md. ★ [www.globalgiving.com](http://www.globalgiving.com)



GlobalGiving.com

Thanks to a variety of individual donors from around the United States, these Zimbabwean girls will get a secondary education.



## DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

## Quake Aid Opens Door to Future Cooperation



USAID DART Team

The city of Bam was devastated by an earthquake that measured 6.6 on the Richter scale. Mud brick buildings collapsed into dense rubble and dust that left almost no air pockets.

**BAM, Iran**—When a powerful earthquake destroyed the ancient Iranian city of Bam December 26, USAID quickly dispatched a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART)—the first time U.S. officials had visited Iran since the seizure of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran in 1979.

On December 30, the 81-member DART flew to Kerman on two C-17s and a C-130. From there, they flew by Iranian aircraft to Bam.

The U.S. aid team included communications and coordination officers, members of Fairfax County's fire department and rescue squad, medics from Boston with the International Medical/Surgical Response Unit, and experts from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

A large portion of the search and rescue component—both human and canine—from the Fairfax County, Virginia Fire Department returned to the United States when it was learned there were few survivors under the rubble.

"People told me when I got there that we were the first official Americans in 23 years," said Deputy Assistant Administrator Bill Garvelink, who headed the DART.

"We didn't know what to expect. But everybody was very, very pleasant. There were no hostile comments or gestures or statements."

"They went out of their way to be helpful wherever we went. We even got a plaque from the head of the Republican Guards, thanking us."

Both Garvelink and his DART successor, Tami Halmrast-Sanchez, said they were moved by the extent of the earthquake damage.

"Everything collapsed," said Garvelink. "It was devastating; worse than Hurricane Mitch," Halmrast-Sanchez added.

In an area of about 100,000, Iranian officials estimate that 40,000–45,000 people lost their lives and another 45,000 lost their homes in the earthquake, which measured 6.6 on the Richter scale.

USAID sent five planeloads of emergency supplies and equipment worth \$3.7 million. U.S. medics set up a field hospital where they treated over 700 victims.

As soon as the DART arrived, team members pitched in with Iranian and other foreign rescue teams to help dig for survivors. However, Bam's mud-brick buildings meant that they collapsed into dense rubble and dust, leaving few spaces or air pockets where people could survive.

When the U.S. team left on January 14, the DART left behind two fire trucks, a surgical hospital, and assorted medical equipment for the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The Iranians "were just happy we were there and providing assistance," said Halmrast-Sanchez.

Indeed, Iranians from all walks of life said they hoped the quake aid cooperation was a sign that the two countries could be on friendly terms again.★

## GLOBAL HEALTH

## \$42 Million Iraq Health Program Near Completion

**BAGHDAD**—Nearly a year after U.S. assistance teams arrived in Iraq to cope with the effects of war and rehabilitate its health system, the \$42 million program to fix clinics, retrain medical staff, and modernize the Ministry of Health is nearing completion, and the announcement of a second contract is expected.

Abt Associates, USAID's prime contractor for health in Iraq, found that much of the primary healthcare system was undisturbed after the war but badly in need of help.

"We found clinics operational and staffed but in need of new equipment. Some of it was obsolete, and some had been looted but later was returned," said George Laudato, a former USAID official, now Abt's vice president for international health.

Many clinics had basic equipment and stayed open during fighting. The U.S. program is supplying new equipment and organizing major training to bring doctors, nurses, and hospital staff up to modern standards.

The aid program has also been working with the Ministry of Health "to help it think through a vision of where they want to take the national health system," said Laudato. Among the issues being debated are the country's environment, sanitation, primary healthcare, drug policy, and healthcare financing.

While Iraq may choose to keep a government-run national health care system similar to that of many developing and European countries, Abt is helping the

Iraqis examine what role the private sector will play and whether some fees for medical care will be required.

The U.S. health aid program is also trying to build a civil society component into the national health agenda, giving grants to NGOs in Iraq to operate clinics, work on health welfare issues, and build associations of nurses and doctors.

Although Iraq's health system was among the most advanced in the Middle East, years of war, sanctions, and lack of funds left it with one of the world's highest death rates for children.

To cope with this, more than 2,000 health workers have been prepared to provide life-saving services for malnourished children. Training for another 8,000 is under way with UNICEF. Over the last nine months, USAID has delivered essential medicines, vaccines, and micronutrients, and established a rapid referral and response system for serious cases.

The Agency provided more than 3 million packets of oral rehydration salts to treat children with diarrhea, and 2.5 kilos of supplementary food rations for more than 100,000 pregnant women, nursing mothers, and malnourished children under 5.

Through a grant from USAID, UNICEF's monthly immunization days have reached 3 million children with essential vaccinations.

Working with WHO, the Agency recently completed the rehabilitation of the National Polio Laboratory. ★

[www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov) **Keyword:** Global Health



Debbi Morello, USAID/OTI

Abd-Al Jabar Khani prepares a prescription at the pharmacy at the Al-Arafa Clinic in Kirkut, Iraq.



# USAID Retirees Look Back and Look Forward

Staffers who retired in 2003 after 20, 30, or even more years working at USAID took with them invaluable knowledge about the world and the way U.S. citizens, through their government, have tried to make it a better place.

Now that the Agency has taken on huge new responsibilities in reconstructing Iraq and Afghanistan and fighting HIV/AIDS, the retirees hold an ever more valuable

legacy of knowledge that many choose to use. Some return as contractors, others take jobs with NGOs, and still others plunge into community or family endeavors.

Here are a few recent retirees who talked about what they are doing and what advice they have for the younger generations at USAID. ★

## 'Jock' Conly Recalls Kenya Challenges



Jonathan "Jock" Conly never expected to make a career of being a program officer at USAID.

"I'll give this federal bureaucracy five years of my life, max," he said he thought in 1977, when he joined the Agency as an international development intern.

But he stayed 26 years, retiring two months ago as deputy assistant administrator for the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade.

"I enjoyed six weeks of real retirement," Conly said. "I attacked the perennial household to-do list with a vengeance, and I was able to spend time getting my family ready for Christmas. And then a job offer came through much quicker than I had really wanted."

Conly is now at the Department of State on a three- to six-month consultancy.

He points to two highlights of his career.

In 1980-81, he served as project officer in Bangladesh and helped privatize the wholesale and retail importation of fertilizer.

And he was mission director in Kenya when the U.S. Embassy was bombed in August 1998.

It was a difficult time for U.S. nationals in Kenya and a turbulent period of Kenyan politics.

"We helped reformers there to try to have free and fair elections and have a change in government, and that actually happened," Conly said.

His advice for young USAID staffers: "Don't ever throw away your travel vouchers in case there's an audit and the system hasn't kept the records right."

"And also take what I call an 'out of cone assignment.' That means take an assignment that's not the same as the specialty of the rest of your career—broaden yourself."

## Rick Nygard Wants to Give Back



what I've been given," said Nygard, who retired in October after 38 years in the civil service. "I'd like to make use of my expertise in management in local government, probably in Anne Arundel County, volunteering on local task forces."

Nygard is also looking for opportunities to do some consulting with federal agencies on budget and management issues.

Being the Agency's budget director was Nygard's favorite assignment because he saw the gamut of USAID programs and operations.

"You get exposure to a little of everything, how much countries get and for what reasons, operations, and all," he said.

His advice for a new generation at USAID?

"Enjoy the work," says Nygard.

"AID has a wonderful mission. Even as a civil servant, I found it a very rewarding career, in large part because of the mission of the Agency: the betterment of people and promoting U.S. foreign policy. That's a nice feeling."

Although he says he's enjoying sleeping in these days, Rick Nygard is busy traveling to see his grandchildren, active in his church, and looking for opportunities to put his management and budgeting skills to use.

"Basically, I want to give back a little of

## Jan Miller Retires, Then Returns to Resolve Iraq Staff Questions



Jan Miller served as a lawyer in the Office of the General Counsel at USAID for 30 years before he retired in July 2003, but it was a short-lived respite.

He's back as a consultant in his old office two days a week. The rest of his weekdays are spent at the Peace Corps.

He's now focused on Iraq, solving thorny legal questions so that foreign service nationals and personal service contractors can serve in the troubled Middle Eastern nation.

His advice to the new generation at USAID is "Talk to people, don't email. You'll learn a lot more. Talking deescalates the confrontational aspects of things."

Highlights of his careers were "helping out employees: getting them out of a jam or getting them a benefit that they were told by someone they were not eligible for."

The biggest change in recent years has been "the return of young people," he said.

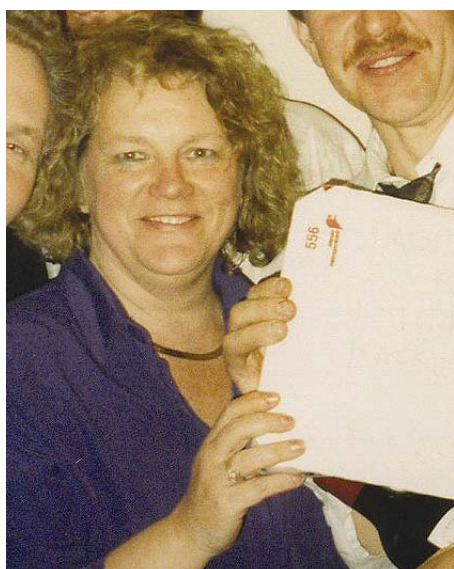
"It's nice to see a lot of young people. Baby boomers took up a whole generation, and with lower personnel ceilings, we were declining in numbers as they retired."

"We had no new entry programs and intern programs. Now it's nice to see new blood."

He thinks people are just as dedicated to the foreign aid mission as in the past.

"People are still crazy enough to care about what they do. It's the same at the Peace Corps."

## Dagny Kreslins Celebrated Latvian Independence in Parents' Homeland



She was recruited as senior desk officer for the Baltics by the Bureau for Europe and Eurasia and served in that position for 18 months.

Kreslins joined USAID in 1984 as a program development officer for the Bureau for Africa, where she helped set up the Famine Early Warning System.

She retired from the Agency in June 2003, happy to end the tiring hour-and-a-half daily drive to work from her home in Darnestown, Md.

"I looked at where my priorities were. I have a granddaughter born last January, and I wanted to spend time with her," she said.

"And one of my sons started a business and needed some help, and I wanted to help him."

But years of work aren't easily put behind.

Since December 2003, Kreslins has been back at the Agency on a part-time consultancy, doing strategic budgeting and budget planning for the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade.

"I help with their annual congressional budget submissions, etcetera. But I only want to do it on a part-time basis. I really want to enjoy the rest of my life," she said.

"But it's also good to be back, because I have lots of friends and colleagues who have always been a big part of my life, too."

Dagnija Kreslins—known to her colleagues as Dagny—spent 32 years in USAID and the Peace Corps, but the highlight came in early November 1991, a short time after the Soviet Union had fallen apart and the Baltic States gained their independence.

Born to Latvian parents and fluent in their language, Kreslins was part of the first Agency assessment team that went to the Baltic States, just in time for Latvia's first independence anniversary.



## Sandy Owens Traded Agency Budgets for Iraq Projects



Sandy Owens retired from USAID in July 2003 and was in Iraq by October.

Now chief financial officer at International Relief and Development, Inc., Owens said he enjoys "being on the other

side," working for a recipient of a U.S. government award.

Iraq is "a lot worse on CNN than in real life," he said, although he imagines it is worse sitting in a USAID office in Baghdad than being with a private voluntary organization.

The most memorable assignment in Owens's 32-year career—most of which was spent in Washington, D.C.—was a four-year sabbatical at the Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome.

He also valued his last four or five years at USAID, when, as deputy and acting chief financial officer, he worked closely with the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to improve the agency's financial reporting.

"Getting to the point that the OIG could audit the Agency's financial statements was a highlight," he said.

"We significantly improved our working relationship with the inspector general's office and the quality of financial reporting."

Owens's advice to new USAID officers is not to "buck the system," but to "get to know the Agency culture and learn how it works from the bottom."

## Cathy Smith Volunteers at Children's Aid Group



Catherine Allen Smith retired in 2003, but she didn't think of it as retirement.

"I never planned to retire, but just change careers," says the 57-year-old resident of Washington, D.C., who worked for USAID in various capacities from 1965 to February 2003.

Smith first joined the Agency as a part-time clerk while finishing her undergraduate degree. Upon graduation she was accepted into the Agency's management intern program.

Over the years, Smith worked as deputy director of the Administrative Services Office, management analyst, budget analyst, and personnel management specialist.

She ended her career at the Agency as director of training in the Office of Human Resources.

Smith sees her last position as the culmination of her career.

She had long felt that "the Agency neglected its employees in the training arena. And I was able to build that program up in the last three years that I was there."

In that period, "the training budget doubled," Smith said. "We went from about \$3 million—essentially going to computer training—to \$6 million, and when I left it was closer to \$7 million.

"We got leadership training, and money also went into procurement training and acquisitions and assistance management."

Today Smith is busy volunteering her time to an international organization that works with disadvantaged children.

She is also working on a business plan for a private business in the area of desktop publishing, and on events coordination and planning.

Her advice to young USAID staffers? "Variety, variety, variety!"

"Do lots of different things during your career," she said. "It helps build your skills, broaden your horizons. It gives you opportunities and exposes you to different things that are useful in your personal as well as professional life."

## Audon Trujillo Returns Home to New Mexico and a Los Alamos Job



Audon Trujillo Jr. is an idealist.

Because he wanted to make the world a better place, he spent three years with the Peace Corps during the late 1970s and joined USAID in 1984.

Over 17 years, he held various positions in Washington, D.C., from international development intern to agricultural development officer and procurement officer.

Before he left USAID in September, he was team leader in the Office of Procurement.

Trujillo thinks the Agency is a good training ground, but that people can see more immediate results if they work for the private sector or other development agencies.

"I think USAID does a wonderful job of preparing you for an onward position, because you get to deal with so many different levels of people, from the drivers to the ministers," said Trujillo.

"But my advice is get in, get out."

Trujillo is back in his home state of New Mexico, working as team leader for Los Alamos National Laboratories.

## Adjustment to United States Not Always Smooth, Says Marilyn Zak



"It's a real challenge to find local people who will do a quality job at a decent price.

"And adjusting to a cold climate when you're used to a warm one!"

Zak said her best tour was her first—Indonesia.

The country was exotic and it was her first exposure to a broad range of cultures.

"USAID had a haunted mission," she said. "Doors would open and close in the middle of the night. A headless ghost would walk around the halls of the third floor, where an auditor had a nervous breakdown.

We had a special ceremony with a *haji* [holy man] to assuage the spirits!"

She worked hardest in Nicaragua, where Hurricane Mitch hit right after she arrived.

Zak said the new generation at USAID should plan for their futures.

"When you hear people talking about their foreign service pension, you think you're never going to stay that long. But one needs to plan ahead for one's time.

"Get someone who gives you good advice. I have a fabulous financial planner. He gave me recommendations on how I should invest my savings, on selling my two small rental properties and buying a bigger home.

"And I said, 'Daniel Ortega is going to run for president of Nicaragua again, we're about to get a new administration at home, we're finishing up the Hurricane Mitch program, and you want me to make three major real estate transactions now?"

"But making those decisions along the way has made it very pleasant for me now."

Marilyn Zak has been fixing up her Virginia townhouse, spending time with her 91-year-old mother, picnicking in a motorboat borrowed from a friend, and enjoying museums and theaters in Washington, D.C.

But retirement after a dozen years overseas is not all a picnic.

"The U.S. is never quite as you remembered it," she said.

"Very basic things are more challenging than I expected, and modern technology frequently doesn't work."



## AFRICA

# Mali Community Schools Favored by Government

**SAMA MARKALA, Mali**—When 10-year-old Aminata left her classroom for the last time in June 2003, she gave a hearty handshake to Monsieur Sacko, the teacher at her community school. “A biento!” she said with a smile. “See you soon.”

Aminata is one of thousands of children who attend community schools built or equipped through U.S. and other foreign aid.

These children live in rural, sparsely populated areas of Mali, where the government has been unable financially to provide and equip schools.

In 1995, USAID started a community-schools program whose goals were to build schools, provide supplies, and train teachers. Parents were also helped to form associations based on democratic principles that could ask local government to contribute to the schools.

Aminata’s school in Sama Markala is one of 1,645 built through the program, which ended in 2003.

The school committees formed by the associations adopted transparent methods of financing schools and accounting for expenses.

Community schools are not paid for through Mali’s formal education system.

Instead, parents pay monthly fees to cover teachers’ salaries and other school costs. The burden is extremely high, said Education Officer Jo Allen Lesser.

Communities also create communal fields

to raise funds for school fees.

In Aminata’s village, contributions started to dry up after several years of economic hardship.

The parent association drew up a comprehensive funding request and presented it to the mayor, who agreed that a percentage of the local tax revenue would support the community school in Sama Markala.

“This is among the first instances where a community school has taken a coherent plan to the local authorities, who have responded in an appropriate manner,” said Lesser. “The commune has taken control of its responsibilities, using a new transparent tax system.”

In other villages, parent associations have approached their mayors with positive results.

The government is awarding more control and financing of public primary education to local communities. The community school system is expected to strengthen as the government of Mali decentralizes.

World Education, AfriCare, and Save the Children carried out the project, with assistance from USAID’s education and democratic governance programs.

Similar programs have been implemented by other donors, and today Mali has some 2,550 community schools.

In 2003, USAID switched its strategic focus from building schools to improving the quality of education. ★

[www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov) **Keyword:** Mali



Alexandra Huddleston, USAID/Mali

In Sama Markala, Mali, a new tax plan helps assure the survival of the community school that Aminata (right) and her friends attend.

## LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

# Milk Coolers Benefit Dairy Farmers in Honduras

**TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras**—A U.S.-funded project has built dozens of large milk cooling tanks in Honduras, helping dairy farmers to increase milk production by one-third and improve milk quality.

USAID had been looking into ways of improving the dairy industry in 1998, when Hurricane Mitch hit Central America, devastating many dairy operations.

After the hurricane, the giant U.S. dairy

cooperative Land O’Lakes started a program to create 13 milk cooling centers (MCCs). The project went so well it was expanded to 49 MCCs by April 2003.

USAID paid for the first 13 tanks. Farmer groups covered the rest of the MCCs and building and maintenance costs.

Land O’Lakes and USAID helped organize the farmer groups into legal associations and trained farmers in milking sanitation, handling of fresh milk, and managing coolers.

The project also worked with suppliers to ensure that tanks and equipment were properly installed at MCCs.

“The importance of these MCCs is that they enable farmers to cool their milk, which dramatically improves the quality of the milk—and therefore the price,” said Leyla Gaytan, program management specialist with the Agriculture and Economic Growth Office at USAID/Honduras.

“One of these small farmers couldn’t buy and run a milk cooler, but as a cooperative of 15 to 20 members they can.”

Before, dairy farmers would milk their cows once a day and sell the milk on the roadside. Now, milking can be done more frequently and the milk better preserved, fetching a higher price.

Interviews indicate that dairy farming revenues have risen by \$11.6 million a year since the first coolers were built.

MCC small dairy farms that milk an average of 16 cows daily produce approxi-

mately 42,120 liters of milk per year, and earn annual profits of \$3,925. Participating dairy farms that milk an average of 34 cows produce about 123,480 liters per year and earn profits of \$11,512.

César Fuentes, a project beneficiary, lost many of his cows during Hurricane Mitch. Previously he milked 23 cows and produced up to 150 liters of milk per day. He sold the milk to local cheese producers at 20 cents per liter.

As a member of a cooling center, he is now selling larger quantities of milk at 31 cents per liter. His herd has grown steadily, and the refrigerated milk is sold to a reliable and stable market.

Fuentes now earns \$5,000 per year, a considerable improvement over his pre-MCC annual income of \$1,500.

As of early January, 40 MCCs were in operation—the original 13 and 27 new ones. The others are expected to be in operation by April.

USAID and Land O’Lakes are aided in this program by RERURAL, a Honduran government project funded by the Inter-American Development Bank. ★

[www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov) **Keyword:** Honduras



Arturo Rosales, Dairy Enterprise Initiative

Milk comes to the El Zapote milk cooling center in Cortés, Honduras.

Daniel Greene contributed to this article. He conducted the study on net earnings of the Dairy Enterprise Initiative, and has worked as an intern at USAID/Honduras for two summers.



## ASIA AND THE NEAR EAST

# Mongolia's Banks Professionalize With U.S. Aid

**ULAN BATOR, Mongolia**—The green “XAAN Bank” logo is a familiar sight in Mongolia—a surprising fact, given that the agricultural bank was on the brink of bankruptcy less than four years ago.

XAAN Bank was losing as much as \$4 million a year before the government of Mongolia asked USAID for help. Six months after the arrival of the Agency's professional management team, the bank was profitable.

“We rewrote virtually every policy and operating procedure in the bank,” said Pete Morrow, an Arizona banker who headed up the team of two Americans and several Mongolians.

XAAN Bank, like many state-owned banks in former communist countries, was weak in customer service as well as personal and investment loans.

Morrow's management team stopped the practices of hiring and giving loans on the basis of political ties. Instead, qualifications and merit were the criteria.

The team also provided technical expertise and extensive training for bankers.

Within six months, XAAN Bank had altered its image from a bureaucratic state bank to a vibrant, competitive entity. Advertising campaigns lauded the bank's professional approach and quality customer service.

New loan products—such as start-of-school or holiday shopping loans—were also

introduced.

A popular product has been the pension loan.

Previously, rural residents had to go monthly to the closest town to collect their pensions. Now, for a small fee, the bank delivers pensions to local branch offices, and it offers pensioners a three-month advance in the form of a loan.

During the past three years, XAAN Bank has run a rebranding campaign throughout Mongolia, a country that is larger than Britain, France, Italy, and Germany combined, but has fewer than 2.5 million people.

XAAN translates into “khan” or “king,” a name with strong local appeal because of Genghis Khan.

When the Mongolian government turned to USAID for help, the bank had 269 branches and 800 employees. It had 10 billion Mongolia Tugrik (MNT) in assets and 10.8 billion in liabilities.

Now the branch network numbers 376, and the bank employs some 1,800 people. Total assets are MNT 87.9 billion and liabilities 79.9 billion. The bank's net assets of MNT 8 billion are equivalent to more than U.S. \$7 million.

After 18 months of U.S. assistance, a survey showed that 90 percent of Mongolians knew about the bank and 79 percent of its customers rated its performance as “good” or “very good.”

By the end of the management contract,



Zandanshatar, AgBank

*A XAAN Bank branch manager meets clients in Mongolia.*

one out of every two Mongolians was a bank client, the survey revealed.

In March, 2003, XAAN Bank was sold to HS Securities of Japan for \$6.85 million. USAID also helped sell Mongolia's largest urban bank, the Trade and Development Bank, for \$12.2 million to a U.S.-Swiss consortium in December 2002.

USAID, along with the United Nations Development Programme, also helped form XacBank, which specializes in microfinance lending.

Together with XAAN Bank, these two banks provide the lion's share of credit in rural Mongolia. ★

[www.agbank.mn](http://www.agbank.mn)

## EUROPE AND EURASIA

# U.S. Helps Ukrainians Divide Collective Land



Lena Kotsybinska

*In Ukraine 3.7 of 6.7 million rural citizens have title to their land. The average plot size is about four hectares, or 10 acres. Most titled landowners lease out their land because they do not have equipment to farm it themselves. Others make do with horses, or hire owners of tractors and combines to till and harvest their fields.*

**KIEV, Ukraine**—Ukraine has a generous share of the world's best agricultural land, but

much of it lies fallow or is mismanaged. As a result, the rural economy is stagnant and

unemployment is rampant.

Many farm workers still do not own the share of the land they were promised when communism collapsed and large collective and state farms broke up.

Without clear legal title, people cannot use their land to obtain credit for seed, fertilizer, and payment of farm wages. They also cannot lease or sell their land to farmers with the means and skills to grow crops.

But USAID has helped 810,000 citizens win title to their land and made the process more affordable.

In 2000, amid the protests of former communists, Parliament passed a law that spelled out how collective and state farm land should be distributed.

Despite that law, most rural Ukrainians were unable to pay high assessment and legal fees to split off their portion of the land.

USAID, working with Chemonics International and local officials, figured out how to cut those costs to about \$5 per parcel in 2001.

“We had three goals in mind—an end to collective farming, fair distribution of land, and creation of a land market,” said Bohdan Chomiak, chief of the Agriculture Division at USAID/Ukraine's Economic Growth Office.

Under the project, Ukrainian companies survey farms and help collective farm members divide up the plots fairly. One person may elect to receive three hectares of grazing

land instead of one hectare of rich soil suitable for vegetables, or family members may request adjacent plots.

USAID pays the survey company half of the fee in advance, and the remaining half only after the local government approves the transfer of ownership and a local NGO confirms that people have their deeds and feel the process was fair.

The new landowners can farm their land or lease it out. Almost two-thirds of Ukraine's new landowners receive at least 25 percent of their annual income from leasing land.

Landowners with legal title can generate twice as much income as those with no title, recent studies showed. “The rich agricultural land of Ukraine is one of its greatest assets, and helping to put those assets into the hands of its citizens is a powerful way to hasten the country's transition to a market economy,” said Chomiak.

Spending \$17 million over four years, USAID will finance 1.4 million deeds, helping 15 percent of the 6.7 million eligible people to secure land titles. A new World Bank loan will finance additional land titles. The loan will also establish a land registry, which is crucial to creating a functional land market.

Selling land will become legal in 2005. ★

*Rand Robinson, USAID/Kiev, contributed to this article.*

[www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov) Keyword: Ukraine



*FrontLines* is published by the U.S. Agency for International Development, through the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs.

**J. Edward Fox**, Assistant Administrator for Legislative and Public Affairs

**Jeffrey Grieco**, Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Public Affairs and Chief, Strategic Communications and Publications Division

### FRONTLINES EDITORIAL BOARD

**Steve Tupper**

Editor and Chief of Publications

**Ben Barber**

Editorial Director

**Kathryn Stratos**

Deputy Managing Editor

**Veronica (Ronnie) Young**

Production Manager and Bureau Coordinator

**Rebecca Gustafson**

Online Editor

**Pat Adams**

Photo Librarian

Contributing writers, editors, and staff include

**Rick Marshall, Kristina Stefanova**

*FrontLines* correspondents and reporters include

**AFGE**—Jeremiah Perry; **AFR**—Ranta Russell, Christine Chumbler;

**AFSA**—William Carter; **ANE**—Jennifer Lindsey;

**DCHA**—Jenny Marion; **EGAT**—Marx Sterne; **EGAT-ED**—Martin Hewitt;

**E&E**—Sarah Berry, Brock Bierman; **EOP**—David Grim;

**GC**—Tim Riedler; **GDA**—Dan Runde;

**GH**—Lester Munson, Chris Thomas; **IG**—Donna Rosa;

**LAC**—Rebekah Stutzman; **LPA**—Bette Cook;

**M**—Nancy Barnett; **PPC**—Wesley Wilson;

**OSDBU**—LaVerne Drummond; **SEC**—Randy Streufert.

Readers are encouraged to send in stories, feature articles, photos, nominations for "First Person" or "Mission of the Month" columns, and other ideas.

Letters to the editor, opinion pieces, obituaries, and requests to be added to the mailing list should be submitted by email to [frontlines@usaid.gov](mailto:frontlines@usaid.gov); by fax to 202-216-3035, and by mail to Editor, *FrontLines*, USAID, Ronald Reagan Building, Suite 6.10, Washington, D.C. 20523-6100; tel. 202-712-4330.

Assistance for *FrontLines* is provided by IBI—International Business Initiatives, Arlington, Va.

## Can You Top This? Joan King Has Visited 43 Agency Missions



Joan King's travels around the world have brought her to 43 USAID missions—possibly an Agency record.

Since joining USAID 33 years ago as a payroll clerk, King has become a top financial manager.

Her travels really took off after 1989, when she went to missions to set up computerized time and attendance systems to replace punched time cards.

After the Soviet Union collapsed, she went to Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan to set up financial management operations for newly established USAID missions.

"I was in Russia when they raised the flag and the snow was taller than me," she said with a laugh.

Asked how she managed to get along in so many countries, King said "I made the adjustment to their country—I learned their language. I did not impose my American lifestyle; instead, I took the time to learn and respect the people and their cultures."

King has faced landmines in Bosnia, heard NATO bombardments of Kosovo from the Macedonian border, and survived in cities with no hotels.

"In Russia they tried to pinch my skin—they had never seen a black female," she said.

The place she enjoyed most was Cairo, and the scariest was Pakistan.

King rose from a \$5,800 per year clerk in 1970 to a GS-15 supervisory financial management specialist. She served at one time as manager of two divisions—payroll and loan management—and worked with foreign governments paying back debts to the United States.

Although eligible for retirement, she said "I'll be here as long as someone needs my services."

When asked if she has any words of encouragement, King said "Work hard, learn everything about USAID, take pride in your work, and have fun." ★

### WINTER READING LIST

These are some book titles, followed by the names of USAID staffers who recommended them, for anyone looking to turn off the TV, sit down by the window, and turn pages as the wind howls outside.

***Wings of the Morning*** by Orestes Lorenzo

"It's a true story of a child of the Cuban revolution (Lorenzo) who grew up to be a Cuban Air Force MIG pilot and subsequently sought political asylum in the United States."

*Dr. Carter Diggs, Washington, D.C.*

***Laughing Boy*** by Oliver La Farge

"An overlooked Pulitzer Prize winner (1929) that addresses turn-of-the-century Native Americans with the visceral immediacy, intensity, and style reminiscent of Alan Paton's luminous *Cry, the Beloved Country*."

***Reveille in Washington*** by Margaret Leech

"The classic story, written in 1941, of Washington during the civil war. It is highly detailed, but I am fascinated by trying to picture the civil war scenes against the map of Washington as it is today."

*Marx Sterne, Washington, D.C.*

***The Piano Tuner*** by Daniel Mason

"A novel about a piano tuner who leaves London near the end of the 19th century to tune a piano for a man who would be the king in a remote, conflict-racked part of Burma."

*Walter North, India*

***The Master of Petersburg*** by J.M. Coetzee

"It tells the story of Dostoevsky, who returns to Petersburg after the death of his stepson."

*Carol Peasley, Washington, D.C.*

***Understanding the Purpose and Power of Women*** by Myles Munroe

"The author tries to clarify the role of women, especially as wives, in the modern society where there are conflicting messages about the role of women in public life, at home, and at work."

*Kennedy Musonda, Zambia*

***Fathers and Sons*** by Ivan Sergeevich Turgenev

***The White Guard*** by Mikhail Bulgakov

"I am reading Russian (Ukrainian) fiction, but not in Russian yet."

*Raymond Morton, Ukraine*

***Sun Tzu: The Art of War for Managers*** by Gerald A. Michaelson

"The book has 50 strategic rules that are applicable to the business world."

*Isaac Kataka, Kenya*

***The Big Killing*** by Robert Wilson

"A novel about diamond merchants and murder in chaotic Ivory Coast and Liberia."

*Ben Barber, Washington, D.C.*

***Sacred Monkey River: A Canoe Trip with the Gods*** by Christopher Shaw

"The author writes about his canoe trip in the late 90s down the Usumacinta River which borders Mexico and Guatemala. It's an adventure story with information on the role of the river for the ancient Mayans. However, Shaw only canoed half-way down and got frightened by guerillas and went home. He never made it to an area of the river that is assisted by USAID Guatemala and Mexico today."

*Brian Rudert, Guatemala*



November 30, 2003–January 10, 2004

## PROMOTED

Shawn William Barrett  
 Maria E. Barron  
 Harry F. Birnholz  
 Bruce N. Boyer  
 Susan Bradley  
 Elena Brineman  
 Mary C. Byers  
 Luigi Crespo  
 George Deikun  
 David A. Delgado  
 Tara S. Faconer  
 Tye N. Ferrell  
 Gene Vincent George  
 Richard H. Goldman  
 Stephen J. Hadley  
 Joyce M. Holfeld  
 Alan R. Hurdus  
 Homi Jamshed  
 Minhtam Le  
 Jeanetta A. Marshall  
 Debra Dewitt McFarland  
 Ronald E. Olsen  
 Robert Allan Phillips  
 Jane M. Prudoehl Nandy  
 Darren W. Shanks  
 Keith Simmons  
 Melissa L. Thomas  
 Mark S. Ward  
 Susumo K. Yamashita  
 Michael J. Yates

## REASSIGNED

Cheryl L. Anderson  
 ANE/EAA to USAID REP/Sudan  
 Robert W. Appiah  
 COMP/NE/OJT to Tanzania/EXO  
 Donna L. Brazier  
 OMP/FS/Reassign to EGAT/PAICO/PAMS  
 Carolyn B. Bryan  
 SC/RFMO to FRY  
 Sharon K. Dittman  
 NE/SPO/SPPM to E&E/EG/EI  
 Joseph L. Dorsey  
 M/HR/PPIM/PP to M/HR/LS  
 Tye N. Ferrell  
 FR/EA to EGAT/PR/UP  
 Gerald Florkowski  
 COMP/NE/OJT to Jordan/FM  
 Ramses Gauthier  
 COMP/NE/OJT to REDSO/ESA/RFMC  
 Michelle A. Godette  
 O/S Lang Trng to Bolivia/D  
 Christopher Gomes  
 COMP/NE/OJT to Zambia/D  
 Thomas J. Johnstone Jr.  
 Mozambique/FM to Kosovo  
 Melissa Knight  
 Mozambique/AFR to RUDO/SSA  
 Elisabeth A. Kvitashvili  
 DCHA/PVCASHA/PDM to DCHA/CMM  
 Marie C. Laurent  
 DCHA/FFP/DP to DCHA/FFP/PTD  
 Joann Feldman Lawrence  
 RS/Africa/EXO to RS Africa/S04–5 E

Steffi E. Meyer  
 RS/Africa/PPD to Egypt/SCS  
 Aleathea P. Musah  
 Nigeria to COMP/FS/Reassign  
 Rosemary T. Rakas  
 Bolivia/D to El Salvador/D  
 John T. Rifembark  
 Bangladesh/PRO to M/HR/POD  
 Katrina R. Riley Sawyer  
 DCHA/FFP to SEC/PIDS  
 James B. Sanford  
 O/S Lang Trng to Mozambique/FM  
 James E. Schaeffer  
 RS/Africa/S01 to DG RS/Africa/RFMO  
 Janet A. Schulman  
 Eritrea/PDID to REDSO/ESA/OD  
 Kathryn R. Soliven  
 OIG/A/PA to OIG/A/IT&SA  
 Donna R. Stauffer  
 Nepal/ARD to Mozambique/D  
 Susan M. Thomas  
 COMP/NE/OJT to PHIL/EXO  
 Mark S. Ward  
 Pakistan/OD to AA/ANE  
 John M. Winfield  
 AFR/AMS to Haiti/EXO

## IN MEMORIAM

**Clark H. Billings**, 68, died December 18, 2003 in Hickory, N.C. Billings joined the forerunner of USAID, the International Cooperation Administration in 1961. He worked for five years in the Bureau for Africa in Washington, D.C. He then did tours in Ethiopia and Tanzania as assistant program officer before transferring to South Vietnam in early 1971, where he worked until the final evacuation of U.S. personnel on April 29, 1975. Billings served as program officer in Sri Lanka, followed by tours as the USAID liaison officer to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Manila, the training office in USAID/Washington, and in the community development office in the Philippines. At his retirement in 1990, Billings had served 22 of his 29 years with the Agency in the field. Until 2000, he worked as consultant to the USAID South Pacific Program, USAID/Jamaica, and the Bureau for Europe and Eurasia.

**Donald G. MacDonald**, 82, died at his home in Washington, D.C., on January 12, 2004. MacDonald presided over the USAID mission in Vietnam from 1966 to 1970, at the height of the war and during the Agency's massive assistance program. During the 1968 Tet Offensive, he was injured when a satchel charge exploded in his residence in Saigon. He was flown home for treatment but returned to Vietnam upon recovery. Colleagues described him as "calm in the midst of turmoil and violence, not easily rattled, and possessing a lively sense of humor." MacDonald retired in 1974, but returned to USAID after the fall of Saigon in 1975 to direct the resettlement of nearly 50,000 Vietnamese refugees at Fort Chafee, Arkansas. He accomplished the task in less than eight months. Before Vietnam, MacDonald was mission director in Pakistan and Nigeria. He also served in Turkey, and as Assistant Administrator for Asia. His last USAID assignment was Assistant Administrator for Administration.

## MOVED ON

Henry H. Bassford  
 Carol E. Carpenter Yaman  
 Robert A. Leonard  
 Terri L. Neufeglise

## RETIRED

Mary A. Ackourey  
 Stafford H. Baker  
 Roy E. Bowden  
 Juan J. Buttari  
 Jonathan M. Conly  
 Bette R. Cook  
 Ralph W. Cummings Jr.  
 William G. Duncan  
 James Anthony Dzierwa  
 Rosalie A. Fanale  
 Paula Feeney  
 Vernita P. Fort  
 Carl M. Gallegos  
 Gail M. Lecce  
 Frances V. Leonard

Mary L. Lewellen  
 Cecil D. McFarland  
 Elizabeth O. McFowler  
 Mary Helen Omara  
 Willard J. Pearson Jr.  
 Linda K. Sadat  
 Douglas Sheldon  
 George R. Thompson  
 Shirley A. Toth  
 Thomas M. Vapniarek  
 Karen J. Vassallo  
 Kenneth Lee White  
 Paul E. White  
 Jill Wiley Thomas  
 Thomas Curtis Williams

Notices and reminders for "Where in the World..." should be submitted by email to [frontlines@usaid.gov](mailto:frontlines@usaid.gov) or by mail to USAID, Ronald Reagan Building, Suite 6.10.20, Washington, D.C. 20523-6100, or by fax to 202-216-3035.

## Notes from Natsios

## ▲ FROM PAGE 1

to better cope with them. CMM works with missions to integrate a sensitivity to conflict into all their programs. In 2004, additional field assessment teams will be sent to El Salvador, Azerbaijan, and East Timor.

- ◆ Fourth, CMM is developing "toolkits" of methods to cope with the hot spots often at the root of conflict, such as youth, land, gender, livelihoods, natural resources management, and human rights. This is the start of a combined research and programmatic response agenda that may give USAID the ability to respond to these conflict-related themes.
- ◆ CMM is exploring how to set up a contract that missions can buy into to get conflict mitigation activities up and running quickly.

Finally, I have asked CMM to develop a training program in conflict for Agency officers, no matter what field they work in, to better understand the problem and know the options that are available for dealing with violence. ★

*A worldwide cable on this subject has been sent to all missions.*



# Discovery of Ancient Mayan Palace Sparks USAID Investment in Guatemala Tourism Aid



Alexander L. Demarest, Counterpoint International

Archeologists excavate one of many magnificent Maya artifacts.



Alexander L. Demarest, Counterpoint International

Maya women working in sustainable gardens.

**GUATEMALA CITY**—Villagers in a remote area of northern Guatemala are getting U.S. help to develop and run a tourism industry centered on the significant archeological find of a vast 8th-century Maya palace with two throne rooms, two tombs, and a ball court.

The site, near Cancuén, will open to the public in February.

Tourist services and staff to help visitors reach the site are being organized and trained by a USAID-funded program through Counterpoint International.

“It’s a unique site in that it was very lavish—a huge palace—and is virtually intact,” said Brian Rudert, head of USAID’s rural development program in Guatemala.

“It’s where they had all the jade workshops. It was a huge trading center.”

The villages around Cancuén are home to some 5,000 Mayan Indians, most of them poor. In 2003, the region got the first road that connected it to the rest of the country, but it remains remote. There is no

bus or train service, and no hotel. Cobán, the nearest city, is two hours to the north.

“Archeologists can no longer stand by as the communities that surround sites are left starving and destitute,” said Vanderbilt University Professor Arthur Demarest, lead archeologist at the site.

“We plan not only to educate the surrounding communities in the splendor of their history but to provide a more complete plan for development incorporating these indigenous populations.”

**The initiative is designed to develop tourism and help provide basic health services in impoverished Q’eqchi’ Maya villages near the archeological site.**

Training classes on subjects from Maya history and archeology to customer service and botany are offered to groups of 10–20.

Counterpoint International provided a boat and motor so tourists can travel to the site, now reachable only by river. The nonprofit international human development organization also helped establish a small inn, which local people now manage.

Counterpoint is also helping equip and staff schools in the area.

Wells and latrine systems have been built. There has never been a doctor or a hospital in the region, but now there is talk of building a clinic and pharmacy.

When the site opens at the end of the rainy season, tourists will be able to see archeologists at work. The digging will continue until the end of the dry season in June.

The site is only a partial restoration—most of the jungle cover that has grown around and over the site will remain intact.

Archeologists believe the palace’s last ruler was Taj Chan Ahk, the leader of a kingdom

wealthy from trade in jade at a time when other Mayan kingdoms had collapsed throughout Central America.

Tourists coming to Cancuén will be mostly “hardcore Mayan archeological types,” said Rudert.

There are other Mayan sites near Cancuén, including caves that served as religious pilgrimage centers.

But Rudert expects backpackers and, eventually, more typical tourists, including those interested in river rafting and ecotourism.

The program began in 2002 with a \$450,000 USAID grant to Counterpoint International. Since then, a management group has been established. The local population gained official co-management status of the site from Guatemala’s Ministry of Culture.

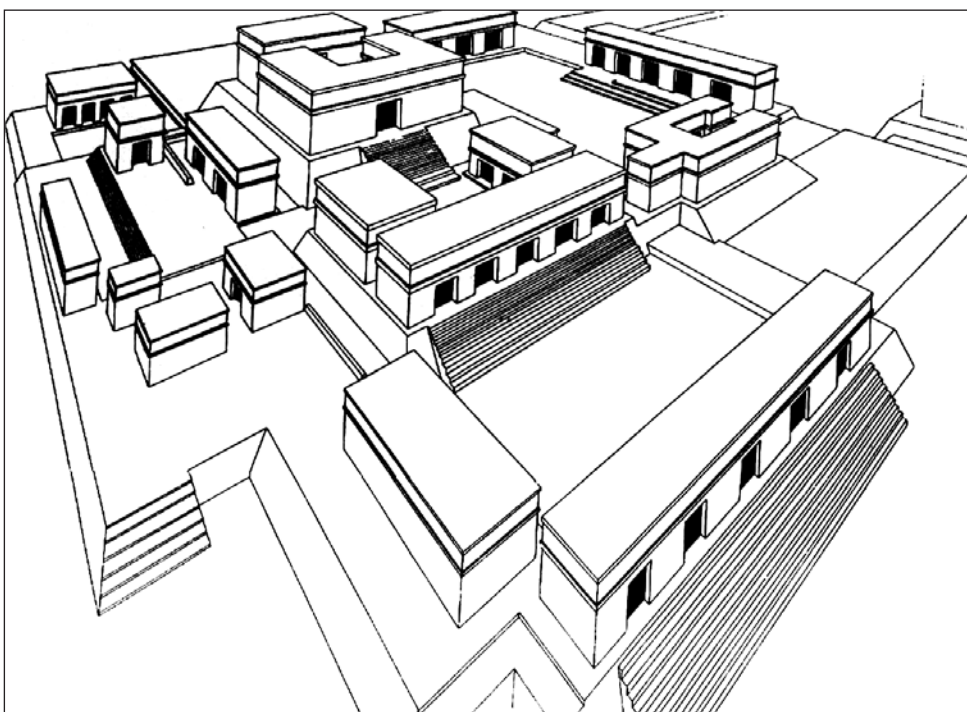
The National Geographic Society, which participates in the project, has provided extensive publicity. A lengthy feature in the *New York Times* in October 2003 will also help attract tourists, Rudert said. ★

[www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov) **Keyword: Guatemala**



Alexander L. Demarest, Counterpoint International

Arthur Demarest trains Q’eqchi’ Maya tour guides.



Luis Fernando Luin

Reconstruction drawing of one portion of the sprawling royal complex.



Alexander L. Demarest, Counterpoint International

Candelaria caves with USAID-trained local tour guides.