

FRONT LINES



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OCTOBER 2003



"You are the people that personify the United States of America to vast numbers of the world, and it's your heart that they see reflecting the heart of America..."

ANDREW CARD

White House Chief of Staff

USAID Worldwide Mission Directors Conference
October 8, 2003

Bush Aids Asia

President George W. Bush announced nearly \$200 million in aid during a trip to Asian allies and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit in Bangkok.

The \$157 million initiative he announced October 22 in Bali, Indonesia, "seeks to strengthen both basic and higher education by supporting parents, local governments, and Muslim organizations," said a joint statement by Bush and Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri.

In Manila on October 18, President Gloria Arroyo announced that the Philippines "received \$33 million of new USAID money for educational assistance in the conflict-affected areas" such as Mindanao, where Muslim rebels challenge the government. ★

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Powell, Rice, Card Hail Mission Directors

Mission directors from around the world met for the first time in five years in Washington, D.C., October 8–10 to "define the new USAID." They heard Colin Powell, Condoleezza Rice, and Andrew Card say that USAID's development work is a pillar of national security—along with defense and diplomacy.

Secretary of State Colin Powell hailed staffers who "go—sometimes in harm's way—to bring assistance to people, to bring hope to people, to show those famous hands of yours, and to let people know that America cares."

"You are on the front line. You bring truth to American rhetoric. You bring reality to our foreign policy establishment that is more important than USAID, and I'm so proud to be your secretary at this time."

Powell's praise came as Agency leaders and mission chiefs tackled thorny issues, such as the changing workforce, reforming management systems, improving communications, and wrestling with the largest programs in decades: Iraq,

Afghanistan, and HIV/AIDS.

President Bush's Chief of Staff Andrew Card told the 77 mission directors and other senior managers at the conference: "Many of you have made tremendous sacrifices...and you're not recognized all of the time for doing that."

"You are the people who deliver the hope that America stands for. And as you're doing that, you're helping to crowd out places where terrorists can take hold," he added.

National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice told the USAID conference: "As mission directors, you're serving our national security interest and you're serving our moral interest as a compassionate nation."

"And the president greatly appreciates what you do every day. You're doing it under challenging and dangerous conditions, and we know that."

"The assassination by terrorists of long-term USAID foreign service officer Larry Foley, in Jordan, is a reminder of the difficult work that you do."

▼ SEE CONFERENCE ON PAGE 7

"We've had an incredible increase in foreign assistance, and that's extremely important. We're going to continue to see that development assistance is one of our three Ds: diplomacy, development, and defense."



CONDOLEEZZA RICE

National Security Advisor

USAID Worldwide Mission Directors Conference

October 9, 2003

Donors Pledge \$33 Billion for Iraq

More than 70 countries, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) pledged \$33 billion for Iraq reconstruction at a Madrid meeting October 23–24.

The largest sum was the U.S. pledge of \$18.5 billion, which Congress approved October 29. Of that sum, Administrator Natsios told reporters October 22, "\$12 to 15 billion are in areas in which USAID usually works."

The pledges go a long way toward meeting the \$55 billion in priority needs identified by the World Bank, the U.N., and the Coalition Provisional Authority.

The World Bank and IMF pledged \$9.25 billion in grants and \$3.5 billion in loans, Saudi Arabia promised \$1 billion in loans, and Kuwait said it would lend \$500 million.

Britain pledged \$900 million, Spain \$300 million, Italy \$236 million, Canada \$225 million, the European Union \$230 million, and South Korea \$200 million.

The U.N. Security Council unanimously approved October 16 a resolution that "appeals to member states and the international financial institutions to...provide their full range of loans and other financial assistance to Iraq, working with the Governing Council and appropriate Iraqi ministries."

The resolution also authorized a multinational force to create stability in Iraq and urged members to contribute troops. ★

WATER RESTORES IRAQI MARSHLANDS

A small boat glides across newly reflooded Iraqi marshlands, nearly 13 years after Saddam Hussein cut off the water, drained an estimated 90 percent of the marsh, and drove nearly half a million people from their villages.

The area pictured has received water in recent weeks, thanks to Iraqi efforts, bringing fish, birds, and regrowth of reeds and other useful plants.

USAID, other donors, Iraqis, and the Coalition Provisional Authority are hoping to increase the flow of water.

This will help the Marsh Arabs rebuild their unique way of life.

The 8,000-square-mile marshlands, near where the Tigris and Euphrates rivers meet, is believed to have been the location of the biblical Garden of Eden.



Ben Barber, USAID

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WORLDWIDE MISSION DIRECTORS CONFERENCE
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Presidential Initiatives Promote Aid Agenda

USAID is involved to a greater or lesser extent in all 19 presidential initiatives announced by President Bush that are in the area of U.S. foreign policy.

An announcement of new money may follow the announcement of an initiative, or an executive order may follow that mobilizes agencies such as USAID and the State Department to take action.

Other initiatives provide no new funds,

but redirect attention and previous resources of a given project.

The Agency has even come up with a special tracking system—a biannual implementation progress report—to follow the development of the 19 initiatives.

Details of the Presidential Initiatives can be found on White House and USAID websites.★

www.usaid.gov Keyword: *Presidential Initiatives*

19 PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVES

The Afghanistan Road Initiative is rebuilding the 600-mile road from Kabul to Herat. The road will make it easier for people to travel and speed the transport of goods, aid, and other essentials for Afghanistan's economic development.

The Africa Education Initiative aims to increase the quality of primary school education by providing teacher training, textbooks, other learning materials, and community support.

The Central America Free Trade Agreement Initiative is supporting a regional trade agreement with five Central American countries by helping increase citizen participation in trade negotiations, strengthening science-based food safety inspection systems, and setting up organizations and rules for settling regional trade disputes.

The Congo Basin Forest Partnership Initiative promotes the conservation and sustainable use of the region's forests, based on recent forest management research.

The Clean Energy Initiative supports access to cleaner, affordable, and more efficient energy services, and encourages cleaner transportation fuels and indoor cooking and heating practices.

The Centers for Excellence in Teacher Training Initiative is training 15,000 teachers at three regional education centers in Latin America and the Caribbean over four years.

The Digital Freedom Initiative encourages the U.S. government and U.S. companies to transfer information and communications technology to entrepreneurs in developing countries.

The Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief Initiative seeks to increase U.S. funding and other assistance to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and treat people living with the disease.

The Famine Fund Initiative is studying effective and efficient ways to prevent and respond to famine.

Faith-Based and Community Initiatives aim to remove legal and policy barriers that impede small charities and faith-based and community groups from providing federally funded services.

The Global Climate Change Initiative is transferring U.S. information and technologies to help developing countries reduce the growth of greenhouse gas emissions.

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria increases resources available to combat these deadly diseases and improve prevention, care, and treatment programs.

The Initiative Against Illegal Logging proposes programs to empower communities, energize market forces, harness technologies, and strengthen the rule of law.

The Initiative to End Hunger in Africa seeks to boost agricultural productivity and trade in Africa by introducing new technologies and widening markets.

The Mother and Child HIV Prevention Initiative is a five-year \$500 million program that targets 14 countries for the prevention of HIV/AIDS transmission from mothers to infants.

The Trade for African Development and Enterprise Initiative promotes regional integration and cooperation and helps African countries develop their export industries.

The Volunteers for Prosperity Initiative helps place doctors, nurses, engineers, information technologists, agricultural experts, and other specialists in overseas programs of U.S. private voluntary organizations.

The Water for the Poor Initiative seeks to improve management of water resources while accelerating international efforts to cut in half by 2015 the proportion of people unable to reach or afford safe drinking water.

The U.S.-Middle East Partnership Initiative supports economic, political, and educational reform efforts in the Middle East and champions opportunity for all people of the region, especially women and youth. ★

Volunteers for Prosperity Launched



The U.S. Volunteers for Prosperity Initiative, designed to tap the professional and technical skills of civic-minded Americans in overseas development initiatives, was

born September 25, when President Bush signed the executive order.

USAID will facilitate matches between volunteers and applications, placing engineers, agricultural experts, doctors, and other specialists in the overseas programs of private voluntary organizations.

"We have a motto for this: we call it 'sharing America,'" said North Carolina

physician Richard Furman, founder of World Medical Mission, an NGO whose volunteers work in Christian missions around the world.

Through this initiative, volunteers will also work on other presidential initiatives dealing with HIV/AIDS, water, trade, and technology. A volunteer doctor or nurse with the Catholic Medical Mission Board might treat AIDS patients, while a programmer who has volunteered with Geek Corps might help upgrade Senegalese payment systems as part of the Digital Freedom Initiative.

The three-person coordinating office at USAID will be part of the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance. ★

Indonesia, Peru Join Tech Project



Indonesia and Peru joined Senegal in the Digital Freedom Initiative (DFI) this month, through which the U.S. government and businesses transfer information and communications technology to entrepreneurs in the developing world.

President Bush announced the news at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit in Thailand, with President Toledo of Peru

and President Megawati of Indonesia alongside.

DFI has been running in Senegal for six months (See *FrontLines*, March 2003).

"Senegal is off to a good start and work there is being received with enthusiasm, so we're expanding to two additional countries," said Tony Meyer, Acting Director of USAID's Energy and Information Technology Office. "We have made two trips to Senegal. We have a country plan, a manager on the ground, and the first volunteer in place. So the DFI in Senegal is under way." ★

www.dfi.gov

Initiative Seeks to End African Hunger



The Initiative to End Hunger in Africa is only in its second year, but has already set up action plans with governments, trade groups, and private enterprises in Mali, Mozambique, and Uganda, said Jeff Hill, initiative coordinator and Senior Agriculture Advisor for the Bureau for Africa.

Regional frameworks for the west, east, and southern regions of Africa have been put into place, and the program is expanding to Ghana, Kenya, and Zambia.

"We got an early harvest in terms of getting a number of programs running on the ground. Both marketing and trade and business linkage programs were established in each one of the three subregions, and we've built linkages with a number of other donors," Hill said. "A lot of time was put into building larger partnerships and getting the government engaged so that we could get fuller commitments to the kinds of changes that need attention."

The initiative increased U.S. financial commitment 25 percent over the \$113 million spent in FY 2003 to boost agricultural productivity and trade in sub-Saharan Africa by introducing new technologies and widening markets in the region. ★

Equal Access for Faith-Based Efforts



President Bush created the Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives at USAID on 12 December 2002, to help faith-based and community-based groups compete for federal funding.

Every year, the federal government spends billions of dollars on development programs, but bureaucratic and administrative obstacles make it difficult for small faith-based charities to access federal funds.

The center seeks to lower legal and

policy barriers that impede these groups from competing for federal funds with new regulations that ensure equal access.

An important step toward this goal is educating offices about the presidential initiative and USAID's history of working with faith-based and community-based groups.

The center also encourages groups to compete for federal funding by explaining how to apply for grants and write quality proposals.

President Bush reaffirmed that faith-based organizations cannot use federal funds to proselytize or for inherently religious activities. ★

FIRST PERSON



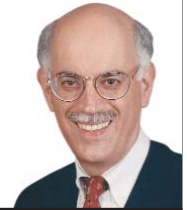
“Studying in the United States, I developed self-confidence and a more curious and open-minded approach to the world. Since returning to the West Bank, I’m comfortable working with business and government representatives from all over the world.”

YARA SALEM,
FORMER PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR,
MONTEREY INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Yara Salem, a consultant to the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah, West Bank, earned a master’s degree in commercial diplomacy in 2002 as a USAID-funded Presidential Scholar. Her photo is included with many others in an exhibit about USAID assistance in the West Bank and Gaza at the USAID Information Center, Mezzanine Level, Ronald Reagan Building, Monday–Friday.

Notes from Natsios

★★★★★★



MISSION DIRECTORS HELP DEFINE NEW USAID

When the 77 mission directors came to our conference in Washington this month, it provided a moment to reflect on the past and plan for the future.

We are on the threshold of a new era of foreign policy in which foreign assistance will play a new and increasingly important role.

Colin Powell, Andy Card, and Condi Rice all came and praised the Agency for advancing U.S. national interests and humanitarian values in distant and sometimes dangerous corners of the globe. In our internal discussions, we tackled some of the tough issues on our plate such as reforming the way we do business.

USAID’s mission has expanded and our budget has nearly doubled in the past three years, in part because terrorism has become a threat to global security.

We also face increased scrutiny to account for the additional resources we are entrusted with. We must show that we use them efficiently and effectively.

Here are some things that I’ve asked mission directors to focus on:

- ◆ Communicate our message using plain English. People do not understand what we do because we do not describe it well here, well abroad.
 - ◆ Broaden our support in Congress and among the American people. We must reach out to those who doubt the effectiveness of aid.
 - ◆ Embrace the branding campaign. We must unify our publications and message to clearly reflect and explain our mission.
 - ◆ Reform our business systems. As we modernize and improve performance, we must get staff involvement and support.
 - ◆ Look beyond development. USAID has many missions to fulfill, including humanitarian aid, fragile states, reconstruction, and geostrategic tasks. The draft *White Paper* suggests ways to deploy our resources in those directions.
 - ◆ Open up to nontraditional partners. Our Global Development Alliance is already working with corporations. Faith-based NGOs can also be constructive partners, particularly in the Muslim world.
 - ◆ Reward good performance. We must recognize and reward outstanding work, particularly under difficult conditions, by staff, foreign service nationals, contractors, and other partners who do us credit in the field.
- We are now in the spotlight—in Iraq, Afghanistan, and in the fight against HIV/AIDS—in a way we have not been in decades.
- If we perform well, even our critics will remember us. ★

Mission of the Month

COLOMBIA

The Challenge

In 1998, when U.S. support for the administration of President Ernesto Samper diminished amidst allegations of corruption, USAID pared down its Colombia mission to a small justice program and a handful of employees. But when President-elect Andres Pastrana asked for U.S. help beyond drug eradication—addressing Colombia’s complex development problems—the U.S. Congress responded.

In 2000, with only a barebones staff, the mission went from a modest budget to a more than \$120 million program.

Meanwhile, the economy was deteriorating, the narcotics industry was growing, and guerillas and paramilitaries were stepping up the violence.

Innovative USAID Response

USAID quickly designed a development strategy to complement Pastrana’s Plan Colombia, which aimed to establish peace in the country. The Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean jumped into action to help the mission design the new program.

“Each desk officer was responsible for working on a specific sector of the strategy. Getting that mission up and running so quickly was a perfect example of USAID pulling together successfully in a crisis,” said Tom Cornell, then director of the bureau’s South America office.

There was a highly collaborative effort between Washington and the field, but others with a stake in Colombia’s development needed to be persuaded.

Fearing that they might become targets of violent guerilla and paramilitary groups, U. S. and Colombian NGOs were at first reluctant to work with the United States government.

The mission grew from 18 to 70 employees, in a country dubbed the “kidnapping capital of the world.” But then-Mission Director George Wachtenheim called it “a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.”

“In Colombia you had the convergence of social and economic development, a top foreign policy priority, and a new government that shared our vision on what needed to be accomplished,” he said.

Results

President Alvaro Uribe took office in August 2002 under a mandate to wrest control of Colombia from warring factions that had made fortunes from drugs, kidnapping, and extortion.

USAID’s strategy quickly evolved to help the new government take on this challenge. “We’re helping the Colombian government strengthen and expand its presence, especially in remote and traditionally underserved areas,” said Program Officer Scott Taylor.



Ramona El Hamzaoui, USAID/Colombia

Colombians gather at a meeting house or cabildo, built as part of a USAID project in Villa Garzon, Department of Putumayo. Education and training programs take place at the cabildo.

The Agency helped the Interior Ministry’s Human Rights Protection Program set up an early warning system to prevent massacres and forced displacement of civilians. By the end of FY 2003, the program had helped more than 3,000 human rights workers, labor activists, journalists, and others threatened by illegal armed groups.

While the security situation remains precarious, today there are some 26 U.S. NGO partners and literally dozens of local NGOs committed to the program and assisting with its implementation.

USAID continues to finance infrastructure projects such as roads, bridges, and schools, and has created work for more than 30,000 farmers and their families who otherwise depended on illegal drug production. To help indigenous communities peacefully resist armed guerillas and drug traffickers, the mission gives more aid to rural communities.

“The rural people of Colombia don’t want to live under the rule of illegal armed groups,” said Agricultural Development Officer Ramona El Hamzaoui. “Our projects and the community solidarity that they generate are providing these people with a true alternative.”

The Agency has given aid to half of the 2 million displaced people in the country, and has helped child combatants return home. It also funded 33 *casas de justicia* (justice houses), helping thousands of poor and marginalized Colombians gain access to justice, alternative dispute resolution, and other services.

“In two short years, we have seen impressive results in reestablishing basic governance services, rule of law, and alternative development,” said Mission Director Mike Deal. ★ www.usaid.gov Keyword: Colombia

ECONOMIC GROWTH, AGRICULTURE AND TRADE

Dairy Initiative Raises Milk Output, Incomes



Land O'Lakes

A boy milks his family's shami goat in the West Bank as part of the Dairy Initiative. The initiative is currently working in 13 countries. New grants were recently awarded for work in Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Tanzania.

NAIROBI, Kenya—U.S. aid has helped the Siongiroi Dairy Plant in Kenya to triple its output since opening in 1998. The well-managed cooling plant pays its suppliers fair market prices and helps them take better care of their livestock. Quantity and quality of milk are up, as are farmers' incomes.

Like other projects funded under USAID's Dairy Directive, the Kenyan dairy program works with the U.S. dairy industry to help small dairy farmers produce more and improve quality, promote cooperatives and regional organizations so dairy farmers or processors market together to cut costs, transfer U.S. technologies and know-how, and raise consumer awareness about food safety and milk's nutritional value.

The Dairy Directive, managed by Senior Livestock Advisor Joyce Turk, helps farmers cope with problems that are part of the dairy industry worldwide, including keeping raw milk clean and cool during milking, storage, and transportation. The program assisted dairy industries in many parts of the world with marketing new dairy products and acquiring basic business skills that keep costs low and quality high.

Some of the Dairy Directive's accomplishments include the following:

- ◆ In Egypt, three out of eight targeted dairy plants now use proper hygiene and sanitation, and 675 small farmers improved hygiene on their dairy farms.
- ◆ In Zambia, 455 producers came together and established nine collection centers for milk, raising their average monthly income by more than \$20. The project also helped Zambian dairy farmers sell their products in Malawi and Congo.
- ◆ In Guyana, many farmers have learned how to produce yogurt, cheese, and

other dairy products. More than 800 agricultural students have studied dairy and pasture management.

In Kenya, the Siongiroi Dairy Plant offers advice to its suppliers and artificial insemination services so that their cows will produce more and better milk.

Productivity rose from two liters of milk per cow per day in 1998 to six liters in 2002. Overall, the plant's output jumped from 6,400 liters of milk per day in 1998 to 18,500 liters today.

USAID estimates that since the dairy plant opened in 1998, more than 25,000 people in the community have benefited, either directly or indirectly.

Bigger incomes have not only helped Siongiroi milk suppliers and their families, but also the schools, health clinics, and businesses that provide them with goods and services.

Siongiroi's business model is being copied by five other communities in Kenya, where 600,000 small farmers dominate dairy production. These small producers supply most of the country's annual 2.4 billion liters of production.

Almost half of the medium and high-quality agricultural land in Kenya is devoted to dairy production—more than any other single agricultural enterprise. So far, supply cannot keep up with the growing demand for milk, especially during drier months. ★

www.usaid.gov Keyword: **Agriculture**

By Kevin Smith, USAID/Nairobi.

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

Lead-Free Mexican Pottery Sells Better

Although Mexican pottery is famous worldwide for its beauty and quality, exports have long been limited by concerns over lead glazes widely used by local artisans. That is now changing, because of new lead-free glazes developed with U.S. assistance.

The lead in pottery posed serious health risks for nearly 500,000 Mexican potters and their families. Weak ceramics markets also hurt potters economically, along with the thousands of material suppliers, shippers, and exporters who are involved in the Mexican ceramics industry.

To develop new technical and market solutions to the lead problem, USAID helped form the Lead-Free Pottery Alliance, working with American Express, UNESCO, the Mexican National Foundation for the Development of Folk Art, and Aid to Artisans.

After a decade of research, Mexican chemists created lead-free glazes that perform as well as the old lead-based formulas in low-temperature kilns. The quality of the pottery remained high.

The challenge for the alliance was twofold: how to educate artisans about the benefits of lead-free glazes and, at the same time, ensure that lead residues are eliminated from pottery workshops.

Through research, the Mexican National Foundation for the Development of Folk Art discovered a cost-effective and simple method of eliminating lead in the kilns of potters. Decontamination will ensure that Mexican potters meet international standards for exportable, food-safe, lead-free ceramics.

With assistance from the USAID Global Development Alliance secretariat,

the American Express Foundation and Aid to Artisans are developing export markets for lead-free pottery, thus providing an economic incentive for artisans to begin using safer lead-free glazes.

Describing this new USAID activity in Mexico, USAID Mission Director Edward Kadunc Jr. said, "We think that Aid to Artisans will create better economic opportunities for Mexican potters—by opening markets and developing products that can compete in global markets.

"At the same time, they'll be helping to promote cleaner operations that will lower health hazards for the potters. Best of all, with the links to the private sector, they will leave in place a program that can continue with Mexican partners over the long term."

USAID's \$1 million contribution to the Lead-Free Alliance is being matched by nearly \$6 million in cash and in-kind assistance from other donors.

◆ American Express will give \$75,000 in cash and \$75,000 in in-kind marketing and public relations.

◆ Aid to Artisans will guarantee \$1.25 million in sales through its extensive marketing network and will deliver promotion, export services, and business training worth nearly \$450,000.

◆ Mexican government agencies will contribute more than \$3 million in technical assistance, intellectual property, and subsidies.

◆ UNESCO and universities and labs in Mexico and the United States will provide more than \$750,000 in research and educational outreach. ★

www.usaid.gov Keyword: **Global Development Alliance**



Mexican potters are learning about the benefits of lead-free glazes that will reduce health hazards and increase their incomes.

DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Nepali NGOs Taking Development Lead Amid Security Threat

KATHMANDU, Nepal—Because Maoist insurgents have increased their verbal threats against foreign aid workers, U.S. and other aid groups increasingly rely on Nepali groups to deliver aid.

Strengthening local NGOs—an aim of the USAID Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation—has become more vital in recent months, as Maoists stepped up their offensive and adopted an unfriendly stance toward foreign NGOs.

Development and aid continue in most parts of Nepal but have been blocked in some contested regions as a result of threats by the insurgents.

To address security problems and continue to meet aid needs, U.S. and other foreign NGOs lowered profiles, shifted some programs to lower-risk areas, and stepped up efforts to strengthen Nepali aid groups.

The Maoist insurgency has claimed about 8,000 lives since 1996, most over the past two years. The conflict has devastated the Nepali economy. Tourism and exports have collapsed and food supplies have tightened.

Maoist rumblings against foreign NGOs are a more recent development.

“By their definition, an international NGO that has a presence in Nepal is helping the government; therefore it is bad,” said Alton Byers, Research Director for The Mountain Institute (TMI), one of several USAID-funded groups working to enhance the organizational and operational capabilities of their Nepalese counterparts.

“The tension has increased dramatically,” Byers said. “But we made the decision that we are not going to abandon Nepal.”

Other organizations have responded similarly. Save the Children will receive \$3.25 million over five years from USAID to help Nepal’s NGOs in districts hardest hit by the conflict. The Agency plans to

work through national NGOs and local service organizations such as Nirdhan, which offers loans and savings services to poor women, and Seto Guras, which is specialized in child development.

Other grantees in Nepal are Habitat for Humanity, which helps poor families build homes, and International Development Enterprises, which tries to increase access to irrigation technology by promoting local trade in equipment.

“Work is going on. The NGOs are making progress,” said conservation biologist Lori Pommerenke, who worked with TMI as a technical advisor during a USAID-American Association for the Advancement of Science fellowship.

Facing increased extortion pressures in 2001, TMI closed a field office in Khandbari, shifting to a less dangerous area north of Kathmandu on the edge of Langtang National Park and in high mountain regions. There, given the collapse in tourism, TMI is concentrating on economic development through the harvesting and marketing of nontimber forest products such as medicinal plants.

Brian Peniston, TMI’s Himalaya Program Director, offered guidelines for foreign organizations, including strong community support for projects and high transparency in budgets, so Maoists and community members alike know that funds extorted deprive the community. Peniston also recommended maintaining a low profile and working through local players.

Byers expressed confidence the situation won’t slow development progress. “There is so much superb local capacity in country,” he said. “It used to be that the experts we needed for these projects came from the West. But we are finding that it is so much more cost effective to use the local in-country talent.” ★

www.usaid.gov Keyword: **Nepal**



Mark Estes, Habitat for Humanity

Checkpoints and stone barricades on the road between Nepalgunj and Tikapur in western Nepal reflect security concerns. Vehicles are slowed to a crawl so they can be inspected.

GLOBAL HEALTH

Creative Education and Zero Tolerance Curtail Female Genital Cutting



Serena Williams/CCP courtesy of Photoshare, a service of The INFO Project

A husband and wife discuss women’s health as part of project in Nigeria that discourages the practice of female genital cutting.

IBADAN, Nigeria—In a dingy, cement building, an *olola*—or native healer—uses a razor blade to slice off the clitoris of a baby girl not three weeks old while her mother and grandmother look on approvingly. The infant cries until she is given her mother’s breast and taken away.

Within minutes, another mother brings in the next baby girl.

New efforts in Africa supported by USAID aim to persuade mothers not to allow the traditional cutting of their babies—a practice that they believe will prevent their daughters from being unfaithful to their future husbands.

To help convince villagers that female genital cutting (FGC) must cease, several African countries are combining an official “zero tolerance” stance with theater and poetry.

Education programs using performance arts and supported by U.S. aid are persuading community members to spare their daughters, granddaughters, nieces, and other girls from the painful rites that involve the cutting or removal of external female genitalia.

Female circumcision may cause massive and fatal bleeding. It can also lead later to chronic infections, sterility, and serious complications in childbirth.

The practice, mainly found in Africa, is performed without anesthetic on infants and girls by medically unqualified persons.

One of the most encouraging developments is that the Senegalese Parliament recently passed a resolution declaring “Zero Tolerance to FGC.” It states that Senegalese should not tolerate or be indifferent to the practice, regardless of its type, justification, or location.

More than 1,200 villages in five Senegalese regions recently declared an end to FGC and to marriages for very young girls.

An informally structured education program for women is growing rapidly, with support from USAID, through the efforts of an international NGO called Tostan, which means “breakthrough” in the Wolof language of West Africa.

Basic education programs targeting religious and traditional leaders and young adults are helping to discourage female circumcision. One role-playing exercise simulates an incident in which a young girl bleeds profusely, is taken to a hospital, and dies.

The programs address such issues as literacy skills, problem solving, women’s health and hygiene, management skills, leadership skills, negotiating skills, and human rights. They are given in four languages: Wolof, Senere, Mandinka, and Pulaar.

The programs are also being implemented in Sudan, Mali, and Burkina Faso.

“I have friends in Kenya whose young girl bled to death in their car as they rushed her to a faraway hospital,” said Dr. E. Anne Peterson, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Global Health. “She was only 13 years old and had been circumcised against her will.”

“Millions of girls suffer danger, pain, and long-term consequences in childbirth” because of the custom, she said. “Zero tolerance is leading to powerful, yet peaceful social transformation that impacts health, democracy, and human rights.” ★

www.usaid.gov Keyword: **Global Health**

Defining the New USAID: Highlights of the October 8–10 Conference

Rep. Jim Kolbe (R-Ariz.), Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, said USAID faces major challenges in management—financial systems and procurement, performance measurement, and human resources. His advice to mission directors: first, make management improvements a “significant and meaningful part of your personal objectives and evaluations;” second, “be a catalyst for process change;” third, encourage staff receptiveness to positive change.

John Marshall, Assistant Administrator for Management, told mission directors that human capital, strategic budgeting, business systems modernization, and knowledge for development are the four focal points of USAID’s Transformation Plan. He said the Agency was modernizing “incrementally, module by module,” buying commercial management systems off the shelf that have been tested and approved for government use. Also, the Bureau for Management is addressing gaps in employees’ skills in information technology, especially project management and system engineering, to fill skill gaps that contributed to failures in the Agency’s IT initiatives in the 1990s.

Jim Kunder, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Asia and the Near East, issued a compelling appeal for USAID-qualified staff to relieve the “almost unimaginable” Afghanistan mission workload. “Needed: Hardworking entrepreneurs, non-risk averse, for compelling, compassionate, high-visibility work. Applications welcome.” One lesson is that USAID needs “staff and contracting surge capacity.” Kunder reestablished the Afghanistan mission in Kabul after the United States and allies ended Taliban rule in 2002.



“This Secretary of State understands the remarkable contribution that you make to a better world, the remarkable contribution you make to solving the challenges of the 21st century, and I will do everything I can to get you the resources you need to do the job.”

SECRETARY OF STATE COLIN POWELL
Worldwide Mission Directors Conference
October 8, 2003

Jon Breslar, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Policy and Program Coordination, said having a joint USAID-State Department Strategic Plan encourages collaboration, while the new joint policy and management councils will give “USAID a seat at the table to ensure State considers our most pressing development issues.”

Wendy Chamberlin, Assistant Administrator for Asia and the Near East and former U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan, proposed exchanges of USAID and State personnel to promote institutional understanding.



Mission directors share meals and experiences at the October 8–10 2003 Worldwide Mission Directors Conference in Washington, D.C.

Fred Schieck, Deputy Administrator, chairs the Business Transformation Executive Committee (BTEC), which brings deputy assistant administrators together once a month to deal with the need for change within the Agency. The BTEC committee “considers recommendations of working groups and votes. The process is working quite well,” Schieck said.

Roger Winter, Assistant Administrator for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, said fragile states “are a major part of our business...and a big consumer of USAID capital.” For this reason, the Agency created an Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation “that you will begin to hear a lot about.” In government, USAID has taken an activist role, boosting coordination with State’s Africa Desk and providing local policy assists. “USAID is a capable partner in the foreign policy apparatus,” he said.

Larry Diamond, Hoover Institute Senior Fellow, said bad governance is always a factor in fragile states, noting the “shockingly low” cost of democracy-governance programs compared to other aid. But they can’t bring change without a local will to achieve institutional reform—a rarity. He advocated “combined pressures and constraints,” though strategic countries may get aid without performing. Funding civil society could promote accountability. ★

Agency Is Critical Element of Global Strategy, Says HIV/AIDS Chief Tobias



Randall Tobias, Global AIDS Coordinator.

Global AIDS Coordinator Randall Tobias told mission directors that USAID is a “critical element—perhaps the critical element—of this nation’s response to this crisis.” Introducing Tobias, Administrator Natsios told mission directors that the Agency was committed to responding energetically and doing all it could to help the man chosen by President Bush to lead the nation’s fight against HIV/AIDS at home and abroad.

As the HIV/AIDS Coordinator at State and for the entire U.S. government, Tobias will have wide powers to distribute funds to NGOs and transfer money between government agencies.

Tobias is former CEO of Eli Lilly. He directs President Bush’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, a \$15 billion, five-year pro-

gram focused on 14 countries—12 in Africa—that contain 50 percent of the world’s HIV/AIDS-infected population.

“This initiative will be held to a high standard of accountability and it will be the subject of constant scrutiny,” Tobias said, emphasizing the need for his organization and all of its partners to remain “focused on the vision” of relieving HIV/AIDS suffering.

Assistant Administrator for Global Health Dr. E. Anne Peterson urged mission directors to get personally involved in HIV/AIDS programming. She said USAID needs to stay focused on results, particularly the initiative’s goals of preventing 7 million new infections, treating 2 million people living with AIDS, and caring for 10 million affected people, all by 2008.

Calling the Global AIDS Initiative a “once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to turn this disease around,” Peterson said more than half of its funding would pay for treatment by 2006, a departure from USAID’s current emphasis on prevention. One-third of the funds spent on prevention must promote abstinence, the “A” in the balanced “ABC” approach to prevention. Peterson said promoting abstinence until marriage was an appropriate message for the group aged 16–24, who are most vulnerable to HIV infection.

The “be faithful” message showed great results among young married people, while the “use condoms” message was more appropriate for high-risk groups, such as truck drivers, miners, soldiers, and prostitutes. ★

Powell, Rice, Card Hail Mission Directors

▲FROM PAGE 1

Administrator Andrew S. Natsios said: "If you look at the foreign policy apparatus of the United States of America, it is undergoing a profound change....We are in a seminal period now, and development is at the very center of the discussion."

"There are now three D's in our foreign policy apparatus: defense, diplomacy, and development."

In a session on redefining USAID's strategic vision, mission directors reviewed the joint State-USAID strategic plan and talked about moving the Agency's mission beyond development to deal with new missions—such as fragile states and postconflict reconstruction.

In a session on improving the way USAID works, the discussions centered on restructuring the workforce, the budget, and business models.

During the session on communications, mission directors were told they project the face of America to millions of people overseas and need to improve the way Agency staff communicate with the rest of the world and with each other. This is particularly important because USAID is now seen as a vital part of the nation's foreign policy strategy.

"As a result, the Agency budget grew from \$7.7 billion in 2001 to \$14.2 billion in 2003," Natsios said. The Agency is getting funding because "we are at the center" of critical issues such as Iraq and HIV/AIDS, he said.

India Mission Director Walter North said conference discussions showed that "We are committed to change. We want to see this Agency carry its weight and stand up as one of the pillars" of foreign policy.

Natsios warned, however, that "bureaucracies are creatures of habit—if we don't perform we'll be marginalized."

"Everybody is watching what we do." ★

White Paper Drafts Agency Path for 21st Century

USAID faces multiple and often competing tasks in the post-September 11 world. The Agency has to make sharper distinctions among its core goals and concerns while supporting U.S. foreign policy and security aims.

U.S. Foreign Aid: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century, a White Paper handed to mission directors, offers a blueprint for broad strategic reforms intended to make USAID policy more coherent, its management more strategic, and its aid more effective.

"What we want to do is stimulate the debate," said Barbara Turner, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Policy and Program

Coordination (PPC). USAID, never told the mission directors, must resolve the "disconnect between what we need to do on the ground and how we define ourselves."

The paper observes that development is not the Agency's only task—it also provides humanitarian relief, strengthens fragile states, supports strategic countries, and addresses global concerns such as HIV/AIDS and biodiversity.

The authors, Senior Economist Michael Crosswell and Policy Office Director Letitia Butler, say aid can be more effective if core goals are articulated more clearly and

resources are more closely aligned with those goals, then more strategically managed.

In the case of development aid, the paper points out that the new Millennium Challenge Account will select a limited number of top performers among poor countries on criteria including governance, investing in people, and economic freedom.

Countries not chosen will include a significant number of good or very good performers that deserve continued USAID assistance. A flexible approach should be adopted to encourage progress toward good governance and to spur economic growth in these countries.

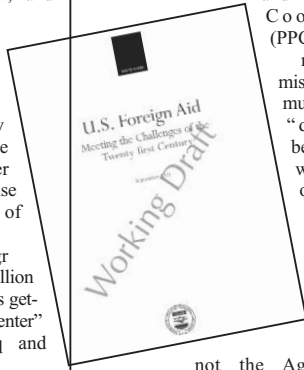
Middle-income countries should "graduate" from receiving development resources, but should remain eligible for aid related to global issues or because of foreign policy considerations.

Low-income countries showing no commitment to reform should have limited development aid as resources permit.

Fragile states—failing, failed, or recovering states—present hard choices. As the White Paper circulates through the Agency and related institutions, an inter-bureau group, led by PPC and the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, is crafting a "new strategic business model" to deal with fragile states.

Selectivity will also be applied to aid for these states, but with different criteria and indicators than for stable countries.

Where states have strategic importance, USAID should work closely with State to set goals and benchmarks for measuring progress. Humanitarian aid will continue to be allocated and programmed based on need. ★



Conference Themes

The following is a summary of key issues at the Mission Directors Conference. Discussions of the four themes outlined below yielded these points, among many others.

Redefining USAID's Strategic Vision

Geopolitical realities compel a revision of USAID's strategy. Mission directors in Iraq and Afghanistan attested to the need for innovative responses, particularly in combating terrorism.

Fragile states drain aid resources. Good governance is a critical development element. USAID must balance responses to crises with longer-term development work.

The Millennium Challenge Account strategy may influence allocations of foreign aid. USAID's White Paper suggests more clearly delineating goals and allocating resources. More flexible legislative mandates would allow missions to manage more strategically.

Improving the Way USAID Works

USAID business systems must be speedier and more responsive, and the Agency more agile, integrated, open, and capable. USAID should be perceived internationally as an intellectual resource and program model.

Business models must evolve in response to the Agency's broad and expanding mandate. In particular, USAID must develop more flexible approaches to funding, procurement, and human resources. Managers must be recruited and trained to replace those retiring.

Mission directors must aggressively embrace change and encourage their staff to do so as well. The Business Transformation Executive Committee is driving improvements in procurement and human resources.

Changing USAID Communications

The Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs is working to identify core messages, key audiences, and effective vehicles for all communications.

Communications templates ensure consistency while offering flexibility for missions to tailor materials to fit local needs and conditions. Support will include a message guide, a manual on graphics standards, and branding guidelines.

Branding goes beyond placing our logo on publications: it is about projecting a consistent image that brings to life the Agency's mission, strategic vision, and core values.

Relating to USAID Constituencies

USAID can better engage with core constituencies such as Congress, the State Department, other U.S. agencies with international mandates, and NGOs.

A key member of Congress and congressional aides provided straight talk about heightened expectations and pressure to account for resources and produce measurable results. USAID systems upgrades must increase transparency and visibility.

To meet new demands of the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan, USAID has to adapt relationships with the NGO community, contractors, and universities.

The Global Development Alliance is showing the Agency can adapt business practices and procedures. ★



deVal for USAID

At the USAID Worldwide Mission Directors Conference, Joanne Giordano stands before a display of diverse USAID publications to demonstrate a lack of unifying style, appearance, or branding. Giordano is Deputy Assistant Administrator for Public Affairs.

Updated October, 2003

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FrontLines Survey of USAID Mission Directors

What is your mission's top challenge for the next 3 to 5 years?



Glenn Anders
Guatemala and Central America Regional Mission

The mission has two challenges: promoting more representative, competent, and honest governance for Guatemala, and getting high-quality, responsive program support for USAID's missions in Central America and Mexico.



Harry Birnholz
Albania Mission

Consolidation—launching new umbrella projects. Launching the largest antitrafficking program in the Agency.



Donald Clark
Nepal Mission

The Maoist conflict, and remaining positively engaged despite the conflict. The Maoists have made it difficult for all donors to work there. But we will continue to address development concerns and contribute positively to the conflict resolution process.



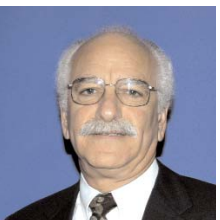
Bill Frej
Indonesia Mission

Winning back the hearts and minds of the Indonesians. The percentage of Indonesians feeling positively toward Americans and the U.S. government has gone from 84 percent to 7 percent. We must reengage in ways to change this devastating perception, especially in the world's largest Muslim country.



Helen Gunther, Acting Director
Zambia Mission

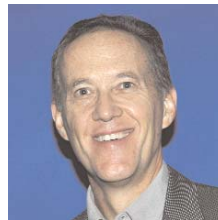
HIV/AIDS. A large part of our educated population is either dying or having to cope with the deaths of family members or the care of orphans. About every Zambian family is caring for children not their own. HIV/AIDS in southern Africa is not just HIV/AIDS in health terms, but the economics of family situations.



Howard Sumka
Bosnia and Herzegovina Mission

The top challenge for Bosnia is to get the country to a point where the international presence can be reduced. Another challenge, which is tied into that, is deepening the rule of law. Bosnia is a now more like a quasi-international protectorate, under NATO and the Office of the High Representative. The country is not ready to operate without those institutions.

What is USAID's top challenge over the same period?



David Adams
Haiti Mission

Living up to the challenge from the Administrator, the Secretary (of State), and the President. In Iraq and Afghanistan, and in HIV/AIDS worldwide, we've made some progress, so there is a changing view on the outside. Andrew (Natsios) has the credibility and we need to support him.



Jonathan Addleton
Mongolia Mission

Having an effective, focused program for an agency that is truly global in scope. The response is worked out at a country level, but we have to focus on certain areas. In Mongolia, we have two important focuses: private sector economic growth and good governance. I think these are vital to the Agency's mission.



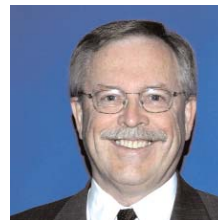
Hilda Arellano
Regional Support Center, Budapest

Relating emergency and postconflict responses to medium- to longer-term transformations; sustaining these transformations to avoid "cyclical meltdowns" of fragile states.



Sharon Cromer
Ghana Mission

Ensuring that we don't pull out of the "better performing" countries too early to focus on failed states. The better performers are poor and have underlying institutional weaknesses that create fragile democracies.



Keith Simmons
Armenia Mission

Regaining an image based on the fact that we are the premier development agency—not only in the U.S. government, but in the world.



Andrew Sisson
Regional Economic Development Services Office, Nairobi

It's HIV/AIDS, our part in reducing poverty to counter terrorism, and building bridges among people all over the world. I think we're good at all of these things—we have a unique contribution to make. We are engaged at a very high level in foreign policy, but we also have great capabilities and knowledge all the way down to the grassroots level.

AFRICA

Repair of Wells Restores Quality of Life in Eritrea

ASMARA, Eritrea—For Terhas Habte, a 30-year-old Eritrean mother of six, spending six hours a day carrying water from a source several kilometers away was a vexing reminder of the 1998–2000 Ethiopian invasion that drove her family out of Mai Aini town in the Debub region.

U.S. funding of a UNICEF project to restore wells throughout southern Eritrea made an enormous difference to Terhas, her family, and others rebuilding their homes and lives.

When Terhas and 3,000 other inhabitants returned to Mai Aini after the war, they found the borehole that was the town's sole source of clean water vandalized and its pumping equipment looted.

In the neighboring town of Tsorona, people came home to find two boreholes disabled and a well filled with stones.

Townpeople had to choose between using water from open wells contaminated by village runoff and making constant trips, often with their livestock, to water points. For women and children who are traditionally responsible for carrying water, this was a terrible burden.

Eritrea has also been parched by drought, bringing a sharp rise in the number of severely malnourished children throughout the region, ordinarily the country's breadbasket.

USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance provided \$1.35 million so UNICEF could fix or drill wells in 13 vil-

lages and towns, six in the zone once occupied by Ethiopian troops. The work benefited about 43,000 people. The number will increase when people return to other badly damaged towns, such as Om Hajer.

The USAID-UNICEF project means that Mai Aini now has three water points and Tsorona has six.

At a July 1 ceremony marking the opening of the new water sources, Mission Director Jatinder K. Cheema expressed satisfaction that USAID could help with some of the urgent humanitarian needs of the border region and "foster the transition from relief to development."

Dr. Cheema noted that USAID is spending more on water and sanitation upgrades in Eritrea than most other programs in sub-Saharan Africa in 2003.

U.S. Ambassador Donald McConnell also attended the ceremony. Mai Aini's women dressed in their finest to celebrate the free-flowing clean water.

Even while pregnant, Terhas had traveled for two and a half hours to the nearest source of relatively safe water. She then waited in line for up to four hours to fill her containers before starting the long march home, where her children were left alone. She was the sole parent at home because her husband was



Women and children of the Eritrean town of Mai Aini draw water from one of three water sources restored or established through USAID funding of a UNICEF project.

Asmeret Tesfamariam, USAID/Eritrea

mobilized at the outbreak of war with Ethiopia in 1998.

Previously, the open wells dug by villagers in the seasonal river basin were always crowded and infested with malaria-carrying mosquitoes. As a result, Terhas and her family suffered from frequent bouts of

malaria and waterborne diseases, and from scarcity of water and family time. Now that there is clean water in Mai Aini, she has more time to take care of her family. ★

www.usaid.gov Keyword: Africa

By Asmeret Tesfamariam, USAID/Eritrea.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Sports Help Break Cycle of Violence in Jamaica

KINGSTON, Jamaica—When the murder rate in Jamaica soared recently, one of most dangerous districts was Grants Pen in Kingston, a crowded, inner city neighborhood of 7,000 with sharp turf boundaries, gang rivalry, and tensions between residents and the police.

But a \$3 million Peace and Prosperity

Project provided by USAID is helping change life in Grants Pen. Residents are learning to reduce violence through mediation and cultivate skills that have helped many find private sector jobs or set up their own businesses.

The work involves the Jamaican

Constabulary Force, the Dispute Resolution Foundation, several educational facilities, the private sector, churches, and community groups.

The first major breakthrough came with a community sports day that brought together more than 500 Grants Pen residents, including some from Morgan's Lane, which has the worst reputation for violence. Though no police or security personnel were present, the day went by without incident.

The event had such an impact that residents of Morgan's Lane signed a peace treaty with the rest of the community that was commemorated by the painting of a mural.

Since then, much more progress has been made. Recognizing how sports brought the community together, leaders of area churches won approval for a USAID-supported community-wide soccer competition.

It brought together more than 500 boys and young men, aged 10–19, who were taught soccer, along with vital social skills on and off the field.

"I saw the USAID program as a godsend," says the Reverend Ian Muirhead, who headed the competition. "What USAID has done is to give us an avenue to help heal the community and to help our children."

The ministers, coaches, parents, participants, and many others living and working in Grants Pen have all learned from these sports

training events.

"You would not believe the response we are getting," said Norris Jackson, a community leader. "Before this program, people were very skeptical. Now they are beginning to believe."

"There is a lot more to do. But we are seeing change everyday and people are now living in hope. What is most important is that the community is coming together to determine its future."

NORRIS JACKSON

Even the business community is paying attention: some merchants are returning to Grants Pen, and those already there are investing more in the community.

The USAID project supports Jamaican government plans to reduce crime and foster better community and police relations. USAID and the government are working to create a model community service center. ★

www.usaid.gov Keyword: Jamaica

Denise Lawrence, USAID/Jamaica, contributed to this article.



Denise Lawrence, USAID

Grants Pen soccer teams line up and show off their new uniforms. The USAID-sponsored competition has defused local tensions.

ASIA AND THE NEAR EAST

Rickshaws, Electric Cars Cut India's Pollution

NEW DELHI, India—Pollution around the Taj Mahal has managed to accomplish what centuries of war and natural disaster could not. It has faded the once gleaming walls of India's most celebrated monument and tourist destination. A major contributor to the pollution is traffic.

India is home to three of the world's 10 most polluted cities—New Delhi, Mumbai (formerly Bombay), and Chennai (formerly Madras). The Indian government, USAID, NGOs, and the private sector have banded together to fight pollution by targeting transportation technology.

The efforts not only helped reduce dangerous emissions from buses and other public vehicles, but promote alternative types of transport, including electric motor scooters, electric three-wheel auto rickshaws called "Eco-Ricks," and a small electric car called "REVA."

The bicycle rickshaw ferrying people and goods is a common sight in Indian cities. It is outdated, heavy, and difficult to maneuver through crowded neighborhoods. But it is pollution-free.

USAID supported the development of six prototypes of modern, lightweight rickshaws to encourage drivers to continue using pedaled versions rather than gas-powered ones—especially those that also burn oil—that emit thick clouds of exhaust.

Thousands of these new models now can be seen rolling through the streets of New Delhi and around the city of Agra, near the

Taj Mahal.

With an eye toward forging partnerships between Indian and U.S. companies, USAID also provided startup loans for field testing and marketing new types of motor vehicles. The U.S.-Indian business partnerships brought in U.S. technologies that fit India's performance needs and environmental conditions. Loans from USAID helped reduce the private sector's investment risk, and accelerated the production and commercialization of the new vehicles.

One partner, Pizza Hut, is currently testing electric scooters for delivering pizzas to customers in New Delhi.

Another partner, the Hotel Mughal Sheraton, is using the Eco-Rick to ferry passengers to and from the Taj Mahal. Encouraged by the Sheraton experiment, Bajaj Auto, India's largest manufacturer of two- and three-wheelers, is interested in producing the Eco-Rick commercially. It will manufacture 1,200 vehicles as a pilot over the next 12 months.

Another pioneering vehicle, the battery-powered REVA electric car, can go for up to 50 miles on a single charge. Its battery will last three to four years under normal city driving conditions.

USAID initially funded tests of the



The REVA electric car gets a test drive in New Delhi.

Kristen Kelleher, USAID/India

REVA in the United States and then gave a grant to field test the car in Delhi. By raising public awareness of the benefits of pollution-free vehicles and providing financial assistance to the manufacturer, USAID helped speed the REVA's commercial production.

Air pollution caused by transportation endangers the environment and poses grave health risks for millions of Indians.

Improved bicycle rickshaws and electric vehicles are small but significant contributions toward cleaner air. ★
www.usaid.gov Keyword: India

EUROPE AND EURASIA

Montenegro Organizes a Farewell to Arms

PODGORICA, Montenegro—This spring, the Montenegrin government joined local NGOs in a campaign to rid the country of unregistered arms. The push to action came when several people died in serious firearms incidents in 2002.

One victim was the wife of Montenegrin actor Vojislav Krivokapic. They spoke on the phone just 10 minutes before she was killed

by stray gunfire that formed part of a wedding celebration.

"She told me that she was about to go out to see a young neighbor who was getting married that day," said Krivokapic. "The moment she went out onto the balcony, she was hit by three bullets. The groom's young brother was the one who fired."

Such stories are commonplace. The illegal

possession of arms, including powerful military ordnance, grew unchecked during the wars in neighboring Bosnia, Croatia, and Kosovo in the 1990s. The Montenegrin Ministry of Internal Affairs (MUP) estimated that there are 80,000 unregistered weapons loose in the tiny republic of 680,000.

The USAID-funded Akcija NGO Network, American ORT (USAID's implementing partner on civil society projects), and the MUP got together to deal with the problem. The civic groups and government officials decided to take an amnesty-or-punishment approach.

Beginning in March 2003, amnesty was offered to those surrendering unregistered weapons. Akcija put on a media blitz that assured citizens that their returns would be anonymous and without legal consequences, emphasizing that the goal was public safety.

To give people a greater incentive to hand over dangerous arms, MUP also announced it would push for a tough new law on firearms once the amnesty ended in May. The draft law that the government expects to introduce to Parliament by the end of the year will be much stricter on unregistered weapons and will include stronger provisions to enforce the law.

The amnesty far exceeded the expectations of campaign organizers. More than 2,000 people handed over 1,770 pistols and rifles, 2,021 bombs, 63 hand grenades and rocket

launchers, 30,000 pieces of ammunition, 150 antipersonnel and antitank mines, and even one anti-aircraft cannon.

By comparison, in the three to four years before the campaign, the Montenegrin police confiscated only 3,230 illegal pistols and rifles.

The campaign underscores USAID's effort to strengthen civil society and create more responsive, effective institutions.

The campaign also broke ground by getting the Montenegrin NGOs to work with the police. The Center for Democratic Transition, in particular, served as a buffer between citizens and the police and built trust among citizens.

"This could be a model for similar government-NGO cooperation in the future," said Howard Handler, the USAID Officer in Charge in Montenegro. "USAID's support demonstrates its commitment to help civil society represent citizens' interests as well as to support more responsive government." ★

www.usaid.gov Keyword: Montenegro



Betina Moreira, USAID

Officials prepare to set fire to weapons, to reassure people handing them over that they would not be resold or reused.

Betina Moreira, USAID/Serbia, contributed to this story.

August 23–October 4, 2003

PROMOTED

Chelsey Celeste Benton
Monique Bryant
Dennis Tien Bui
Gilbert Collins
Teresa Cooper
Regina Dennis
Krista Desgranges
Claire Ehmann
Aler Grubbs
Frederick Jones
Melinda Lucke
Stephanie Molina
Dana Peterson
Jennifer Ragland
Vann Rolfson
Paul Sabatine
Gwendolyn Denine Savoy
Veeraya Somvongsiri
Allyson Stroschein

IN MEMORIAM

Donald A. Drga, 60, passed away suddenly on October 17, 2003, at his home in Austin, Texas. Drga joined USAID in 1981 and worked as an Agricultural Development Officer in the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean. He also served at posts in Washington, D.C., Panama, The Gambia, and Mozambique. His government service included eight years with the Peace Corps, beginning in 1965 as a volunteer in Bolivia, and later as Assistant Peace Corps Director in Jamaica and Paraguay. He retired from USAID in November 2002.

Cheryl (Sherri) McCarthy, 53, died October 8, 2003. McCarthy began her development career as a Peace Corps volunteer in Brazil. She joined USAID in 1980, and served in many countries in Africa. Her final assignment before retirement in October 2000 was Associate Director of the Office of Strategy, Program, and Support in Cairo, Egypt.

Roderick Lowell Smith, 91, died September 9 in Edgewater, Okla. From 1943 until the end of the World War II, Smith was a radio officer with the Merchant Marine. He joined the Navy Department in 1948, and held various positions before transferring to USAID as a personnel officer. Smith became the Far East Desk Officer, and then a Program Developer in Korea. After retiring from the Agency in 1970, Smith returned to Korea as a consultant to USAID.

Rebecca Black
 RUDD/SSA to India/EG
Dan Blumhagen
 PPC/SPP/SPA to West Bank/Gaza
Betsy Brown
 COMP/FSLT to Russia/SSR
Christopher Brown
 COMP/FSLT to Russia/DHRD
Clifford Brown
 COMP/FSLT to CA/DO
Kojo Busia
 Mali/PROG to COMP/LWOP
Candace Buzzard
 COMP/NE/OJT to Zimbabwe/GD

Robert Clay
 ZAMBIA/D to India/PHN
Robert Crabtree
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J. Michael Deal
 AA/LAC to Colombia

Dona Mari Dinkler
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 COMP/FS/REASSIGN to Ukraine/REXO

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 Bangladesh/DIR to CA/DO

Brooke Andrea Isham
 Russia/EPR to Jordan/PM

Assia Ivantcheva
 COMP/NE/OJT to Ukraine/DST

Mosina Jordan
 Jamaica-CAR/DIR to COMP/FS/REASSIGN

Cynthia Jo Judge
 Egypt/PROC to RCSA/RCO

Edward Kadunc Jr.
 COMP/LT TRNG to Mexico

Erna Kerst
 AFR/WA to COMP/LT TRNG

Richard Kocik
 RIG/San Salvador to OIG/A/PA

Sheila Lutjens
 GH/HIDN/NUT to Nepal/HFP

Roberta Mahoney
 Egypt/EG to COMP/LT TRNG

Sandra Minkel
 COMP/NE/OJT to RSC/RFMO

REASSIGNMENTS

Abdel Moustafa
 ANE/MEA to EGAT/AG/ATGO

William Murphy
 OIG/A/PA to OIG/A/HL&C

Scott Nichols
 RIG/Cairo to OIG/4/DD

Dana Ott
 AFR/SA to DCHA/PVC-ASHA/PPO

Randall Peterson
 RCSA/RMI to COMP/FS/REASSIGN

Gregory Picur
 RIG/Budapest to OIG/4/DD

Andrew Plitt
 Morocco/OFM to Jordan/FM

Carl Shakir Rahmann
 Haiti/PHN to Iraq/OD

Bridget Ralyea
 DCHA/FFP/DP to DCHA/FFP/EP

Denny Robertson
 Romania to Caucasus

Mitro Darren Roman
 OIG/A/PA to OIG/A/HL&C

Joseph Ryan Jr.
 Philippines/OED to Egypt/EG

William Schaeffer
 Egypt/MGT to RS/Africa/EXO

Meri Sinnitt
 Honduras/HR to India/PHN

Thomas Staal
 DCHA/PPM to Iraq/OD

Richard Steelman
 LAC/CAR to ANE/MEA

John Tincoff Jr.
 Ethiopia/EXO to COMP/FS/REASSIGN

Theresa Tuano
 COMP/NE/OJT to Indonesia/REM

Karen Turner
 COMP/LT TRNG to Jamaica-CAR/DIR

Ryan Washburn
 COMP/NE/OJT to WARP

Robert Wuertz
 PHIL/OGP to Philippines/OED

Orion Yeandel
 RSC/OD to Russia/D

Sheila Young
 COMP/NE/OJT to Honduras/ANRO

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Belinda Barrington
Lorraine Bellack
William Douglass
Frederick Guymont
Michael Haer
Kelly Kammerer
Michael Kitay
Margaret Kromhout
Bryan Kurtz
Thomas Lee Rishoi
Jonathan Sleeper
Mark Arthur Smith
John Swallow
Audon Trujillo Jr.

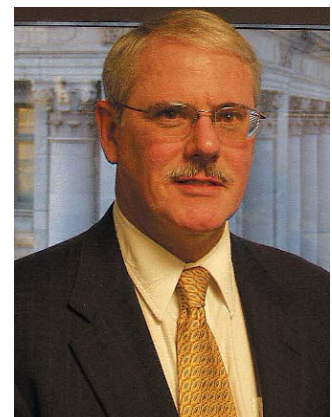
MOVED ON

Phillip Amos
William Cira
James Clad
Patrick Cronin
Stacia George
Christine Gribble
John Gunning
Robert Haladay
Judith Hawkins
Shannon Marsh
Theresa Pollitt
Mary Valenzuela



Kathryn Stratos, USAID

Counselor to the Agency Willard J. Pearson, pictured here with his wife, Genie, celebrated his retirement on September 24, 2003.



Ben Barber, USAID

Don Muncy retired on October 31, 2003, after 31 years with USAID, including 12 years as head of the democracy office in the Bureau for Africa.

Lisa Fiely Named CFO

Lisa Doherty Fiely, until recently a senior manager for business systems modernization at the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), has been named USAID Chief Financial Officer.

She joins USAID as the Agency is embarking on major business systems upgrades, including worldwide deployment of the Agency's core accounting system, Phoenix, currently operating in Washington.

"We're rolling it out to the missions, aiming to have the system up and running in all the USAID locations in the course of 2005," Fiely said. "That'll be a real challenge."

Fiely's 24-year federal career includes service in auditing capacities at the departments of Interior and Treasury, the Social Security Administration, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). At the EPA she moved into financial management, later joining the IRS as a finance specialist. She became head of the IRS Financial Management Division, later



Lisa Fiely, USAID's new Chief Financial Officer.

deputy CFO, then acting CFO.

She took charge of IRS internal management systems in 2000.

A certified public accountant, Fiely holds a master's in accounting science from George Washington University and a bachelor's in business from Boston University. ★

Suzanne Chase Receives USAID's Outstanding Achievement Award

On September 25, in a small ceremony in a nursing home attended by family, close friends, and coworkers, Suzanne Chase was presented with USAID's Outstanding Career Achievement Award, the second highest award presented to a career employee upon retirement.

Chase was recognized for "her outstanding dedication to and outstanding achievement in promoting USAID development objectives and U.S. foreign policy goals through the production of award-winning publications and videos."

Chase retired from USAID May 17, 2003, after 20 years with the federal government. She worked for many years for the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs, and was in charge of printed publications and video production for USAID, including the publication of *FrontLines*.



Suzanne Chase, recipient of USAID's Outstanding Career Achievement Award.

Friends wishing to visit or call Chase can contact *FrontLines* for further information. ★

Blacks In Government Group Confers on Professional Development

DENVER, Colo.—More than 3,000 Members of Blacks In Government (BIG) were in Denver August 25–29 to attend the 25th Annual National Training Conference, "Achieving Excellence through Professional Development."

State and federal agencies—including USAID, the departments of State, Commerce, and Homeland Security, and the GSA—sent employees to workshops on management, leadership skills, information technology, communications, career development, and equal employment opportunities.

BIG was established as a nonprofit organ-

ization in 1975. It is committed to improving public service by "promoting equality, excellence, and opportunity in the workplace," said USAID/ BIG President Melvin Porter.

The USAID chapter, started in August 2000, supports BIG's mission by promoting professional development for all USAID employees. It also holds programs to enhance education and ethnic pride.

For more information, contact Melvin Porter or Membership Chair Brigitte Tolbert. ★

By Patricia Adams, USAID/LPA and USAID/BIG member.



Pat Adams, USAID

Millicent Muschette, an Agency human resource specialist, speaks with Denver high school students while staffing the USAID booth at the BIG conference.

King of Jordan Hosts Foleys



Debra Mosel, USAID

The family of slain USAID foreign service officer Larry Foley visited Jordan at the invitation of His Majesty King Abdullah II in September 2003. In front of Baraka Palace, from left to right, are Jeremie Foley, Michael Foley, His Majesty King Abdullah II, Virginia Foley, and Megan Foley.

Foley was Executive Officer at the Jordan mission when he was slain by gunmen in front of his home in Amman October 28, 2002. Jordan has put on trial in absentia Abu Musab al Zarqawi, a Jordanian linked to Al Qaeda, for killing Foley.

The State Department this month offered a \$5 million reward for information leading to the capture of Zarqawi, who is also suspected of orchestrating the August bombing of the Jordanian Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq.

HELP WANTED: PEOPLE WHO WORKED ON USG KOREA ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS



FrontLines would like to interview people who worked on U.S. government assistance programs in Korea, Taiwan, and other countries in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s for an article on countries that have "graduated" from foreign aid. Please send your contact information to FrontLines@usaid.gov.

Notices and reminders for "Where in the World..." should be submitted by e-mail to frontlines@usaid.gov or by mail to Mary Felder, USAID, Ronald Reagan Building, Suite 6.10.20, Washington, D.C. 20523-6100, or by fax to 202-216-3035.

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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 e-mail to 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.

Historically Black Colleges Honored

Administrator Natsios addressed approximately 200 conferees September 15 from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) holding their annual national conference week in the Washington area. The conference took place September 14–17, 2003 in Crystal City, Va.

Natsios also presented USAID-HBCU Partnership Certificates to 10 of the colleges and universities that are new partners in international development.

These institutions are Alabama A&M University, Albany State University, Dillard University, Elizabeth City State University, Fisk University, Huston-Tillotson College, Morgan State University, Jackson State University, St. Augustine's College, and Winston-Salem State University.

They were given the certificates in recognition of their contributions to international development through partnership awards they received in 2003 that support the U.S. foreign assistance program.



Administrator Natsios and 10 recipients of USAID-HBCU Partnership Certificates.

The U.S. Department of Education's White House Initiative on HBCUs hosted the event. President Bush issued a proclamation designating September 14–20 as National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week to commemorate the contributions made to the nation's growth by these institutions. ★

By Tracy Scrivner, USAID

De Soto Institute Gets Grant

USAID will give \$25 million in aid to Hernando De Soto's Institute for Liberty and Democracy (ILD) for promarket development projects in Iraq, Ethiopia, and 18 other countries, Administrator Natsios announced October 14.

"USAID stands ready to help them," said Natsios at a ceremony announcing the grant. He noted that the Agency has been a supporter since 1982, when the ILD was created.

Called one of the most influential think-tanks on economic development, De Soto's group has worked around the world to help

peasants obtain bank loans and credit for lands that are often held without formal title.

Because financial institutions usually require such titles before extending credit, billions of dollars in land values are thus unable to be used.

De Soto's aim, backed by USAID, is to free up that capital so that poor households can invest in everything—from irrigation to education to farm equipment.

"Hernando has been saying all along: the problem is not so much in a country's culture, as in the legal structure of its property system," said Natsios. ★

Inspector General Marks 25th Anniversary of IG Act

The Agency's Inspector General, Everett L. Mosley, and other federal inspectors general are celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Inspector General Act of 1978, although USAID's "IG" had such oversight for 16 years before that date.

In 1961, Congress established the "Inspector General for Foreign Aid" within the State Department. Later, an Auditor General was created. It continued until USAID came under the Inspector General Act in 1981.

That last step established the office's independence from management.

"We're celebrating with the community," Mosley said. "We want to let people know more about the Inspector General office and some of its history."

In the first half of FY 2003, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) opened 71 investigations that resulted in total savings or recoveries of \$1,651,125. In the same period, 224 audit reports were issued with recommended monetary savings or recoveries of \$8,161,712.

Meanwhile, the large disbursements for the reconstruction of Iraq have led the OIG

to mobilize its staff to pursue concurrent, or real-time, audits.

Beyond the audit and investigation functions, Mosley said that his office, like others in the federal community, prefer to see themselves as a resource for Agency management and an agent for change, available to managers to help them and their offices achieve their goals.

At USAID, a key step in that process is presenting audit findings and recommendations to the Administrator and senior managers, and seeking their input. "We want to get the story right, the facts correct, have their side of the story, always," Mosley said.

More routinely, the OIG is a resource for USAID managers seeking guidance on controls needed for the proper administration of development programs. "If you talk to most USAID managers—and certainly enlightened managers—they understand that we are here to help them," Mosley said.

While the OIG does not carry out USAID programs, it has its own development role, which it calls "expanding accountability": helping foreign government agencies and institutions prevent and detect fraud and cor-



OIG staff members perform "America the Beautiful" during the 25th anniversary celebration of the Inspector General Act, held on October 22, 2003.

ruption in operations funded or sponsored by USAID.

The OIG also provides technical assistance

to overseas auditing institutions, and has agreements with about 20 countries for the audit of agencies that receive U.S. funds. ★

Abuse Prevention Unit Takes Action in Liberia

MONROVIA, Liberia—When U.N. humanitarian officers planned to move thousands of uprooted Liberians from overcrowded schools and other shelters, USAID's Abuse Prevention Officer Jeff Drumtra asked them to delay the move until U.N. peacekeeping forces could assess the security of the new site and offer some protection.

Although the U.N. agency was eager to move the displaced people to a location where it could provide better food, sanitation, and other services, it agreed to notify the peacekeepers first.

By the time the move happened a day later, the peacekeepers had established a sentry post to keep watch around the clock.

"Thinking twice, as opposed to moving as fast as you can, is counter to humanitarian workers' instincts," said Drumtra, a member of the Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), who used to work for U.S. Committee for Refugees, a private voluntary group.

As USAID's first abuse prevention officer in Africa, Drumtra's role was to raise questions about security and human rights and make sure that humanitarian aid did not lead accidentally to greater harm.

"Sometimes local people pulled aid workers aside when they were planning to deliver food to a town, and instead suggested that they wait with the deliveries," said Drumtra, explaining that roaming militia have robbed and killed recipients of food aid.

For instance, out of concern for townspeople's safety, humanitarian workers delayed food deliveries to thousands of hungry people in the port town of Buchanan

in September. And when they started delivering aid to towns along the highway between Monrovia and Totota in central Liberia, they picked their spots carefully, weighing the risks to the people they were trying to help.

Drumtra traveled with other DART members on these missions, documenting Liberians' stories of terror at the hands of teenagers with guns.

With 4,500 blue-helmeted U.N. peacekeepers on the ground and at least another 10,000 expected by March, armed young men continue to roam the countryside, intent on raping and looting "while they can." The bands have adopted the slogan, "Operation Closing Time," in place of the 1990s militia slogan, "Operation Pay Yourself."

Survivors of the violence sweeping the countryside told Drumtra of their arms being wired together at the elbows for days while they were forced to move goods looted by the thugs. Others were beaten because they had no livestock to hand over.

Sexual violence is epidemic, with up to 10 men at a time gang-raping women, girls, and even toddlers.

Drumtra said he hopes USAID will fund local human rights groups to document such crimes so that perpetrators can be charged when peace and a justice system are restored to Liberia.

An Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) assessment team in Liberia has been looking at how to expand human rights programming. The abuse prevention program in Liberia is managed by OTI and works out of the office of the DART team. ★



Fiona Shanks, USAID

Jonney Gbayan, his wife, and two children in a transit center outside of Totota in central Liberia. The family fled on foot when their home was attacked. Gbayan said they will not return home until peacekeepers establish security.

Looking Back on Better Days In Monrovia

BY GERALD ZARR

The school year had just started, and I was new to Liberia. I looked down the class list and my eyes settled on the name Nehemiah Monger.

I asked Monger to explain a point on property law. He started speaking in such heavily accented English I couldn't grasp his point. I started to sweat. Rather than admit my predicament, I asked another student if he agreed with Monger.

"I'm not sure," Arthur Padmore replied.

"Why not, Mr. Padmore?"

"Frankly, I didn't understand a word he said."

And there in microcosm, were Liberia's two societies.

Padmore was an "Americo-Liberian," a descendent of freed American slaves, the small minority who ran the country since the early 19th century.

Monger was a "tribal African," a group that makes up 95 percent of Liberia's population. Padmore had gone abroad for college, while Monger had an "upcountry" education.

After a few years of practicing law on Wall Street, I was bored and wanted a change. So early in 1965 I signed a two-year contract to teach at the University of Liberia's new law school, which consisted of two offices, four classrooms, and a 3,000-book library.

Liberia had adopted the Anglo-American

common law, and the law school used an American-style curriculum, so it wasn't hard for me to get my bearings.

I taught from American legal texts, modified by any Liberian cases and statutes I could find. The statutes were easy, thanks to Professor Milton Konvitz of Cornell University Law School, who in 1956 collected, arranged, indexed, and published all the Liberian laws then in force. But often I had to track down court decisions, which I mimeographed and passed out in class.

My two years in Monrovia were a mix of hard work and fun.

Parts of the city were almost glitzy. Mamba Point was dotted with villas and foreign embassies with stunning views of the Atlantic. Dance parties at the Ducor Intercontinental echoed to the beat of the West African high life. Sundays were spent on the beautiful white sand beaches close to the capital.

The law school's achievements—the law journal, the training program for new judges and magistrates, and an impressive crop of new graduates—now seem almost ridiculous in the wake of the devastation that has ripped Liberia.

In 1980, Master Sergeant Samuel Doe seized power and replaced the country's constitution, drafted by a 19th-century Harvard law professor, with power from the

barrel of a gun.

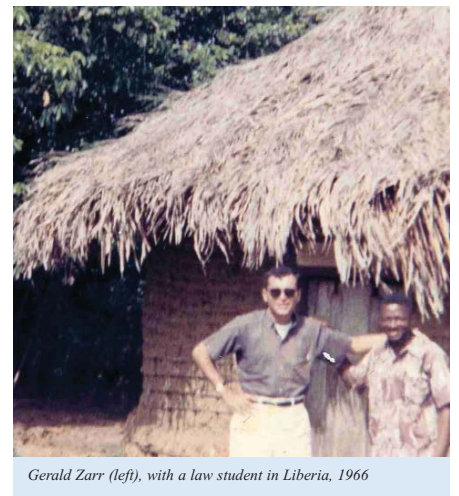
In 1990, Liberia's civil war burst into the capital city, and the university became a battlefield.

"The combatants seemed determined to destroy not just Liberia, but also its mind and soul," says former University of Liberia President Patrick Seyon.

In the past, Liberian cease-fires have only served as a prelude for more fighting. This time, Liberians hope and pray the madness is over.

I think back to the Sunday morning long ago when I was driving upcountry on dusty laterite roads. I was hot, lost, and late. I saw a Liberian walking along the road, carrying an umbrella to shield himself from the bright sun. I braked fiercely and yelled: "How do I get to Bomi Hills from here?"

The man was about 55, which then seemed very old to me. He wore a white shirt, grey slacks, and carried a bible. He looked at me carefully, ignoring the cloud of laterite dust I had stirred up settling on his clothes. A smile creased his face.



Gerald Zarr (left), with a law student in Liberia, 1966

"I will tell you, sir. But in this country we always say 'good morning' first."

For Liberia we wish a brighter tomorrow.★

Gerald "Jerry" Zarr, a retired USAID foreign service officer, edited this article for use in FrontLines. The original appeared in the Los Angeles Times and the International Herald Tribune.

Ben Barber, FrontLines editorial director, traveled throughout Iraq September 18–October 3, 2003. These are some of his reports.

Clean Water Flows in Al-Amarah

AL-AMARAH, Iraq—Kareem Noori stands on a pier, peering into the murky water of a branch of the Tigris River. He is holding tightly to a long white pipe that descends to a pump below the surface.

"For 15 years people came here to use the dirty river water, hauling it away in buckets," said Noori, head of the Water Department of this southeastern Iraqi city. "Seven days ago the water started flowing."

Since the USAID project supplied \$18,000 for materials and labor, about 40,000 people who live near the banks of the river now have water flowing into their homes and shops.

Two submersible pumps, pipes, an emergency generator, chlorine, and filters have been installed.

Across the street, a shopkeeper starts the water flowing into a red bucket. At first the water is cloudy, but in a few minutes it begins to run clear.

"We hooked up some of the old pipes, so it takes a few minutes to rinse out the sand and debris," said Noori.

Halima Yunis, who has lived in the neighborhood for 17 years, also shows off her new water supply.

"I used to get sick from the river water," said her husband Ahmed Hamid, pointing to his stomach.

The family used to drink untreated river water. But since the purified water began running, Hamid said he has not been sick.

Saddam Hussein's government started the water project years ago but left it incomplete. Many believe that the government deliberately denied southern Iraq services such as clean water to punish the Shiite population for its lack of support.

The water project was organized by the American Refugee Committee, working under the Coalition Provisional Authority. ★



Ben Barber, USAID

Kareem Noori checks the water flowing from a new water treatment plant in Al-Amarah.

New Road Links 75,000 Iraqis

AL HILLAH, Iraq—The new road had not been officially handed over to local officials by the contractor, but already vehicles and cattle were using the asphalt swath across south central Iraq.

"People are grateful to me and they stop to thank me," said contractor Mahmoud Janabi, whose company built the seven-mile road with U.S. foreign assistance.

Before the bulldozers, graders, and tar machines went to work under the USAID project, most of the towns had no road linking them to the country's main travel arteries.

"Cars could not get through and most people could not even walk out through the mud in winter. They could not get to the other towns or to the markets," said Janabi.

While the road is far from smooth—vehicles can travel only about 20 miles per hour—it should last 10 to 15 years. Communities along the road have agreed to learn how to maintain it.

The new road was constructed through the



Ben Barber, USAID

Towns outside Al Hillah will no longer be isolated during the rainy season, said Mahmoud Janabi, manager of the Iraqi company that built the road.

efforts of an NGO, funded by USAID and working in coordination with the governing Coalition Provisional Authority. ★

Councilors Participate in Democracy

BAGHDAD, Iraq—A man shouts out his opinions while a cleric, three women, and other members of the Karkh District Council listen.

The 20 or so councilmembers are practicing democracy for the first time—hiring an administrator, deciding on employee salaries, and agreeing to ask the city government for a computer.

One of the the woman councilmembers, Shatha Hadi, said that U.S. assistance made it possible for the new councils to form and begin to play a role in running the city's affairs.

U.S. civil affairs troops and USAID, working in cooperation with the governing Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), organized meetings of local citizens in 88 neighborhoods of Baghdad.

Each area selected an advisory council to deal with local issues ranging from sewage to security. The neighborhood councils elected nine district councils—such as the Karkh District Council—that send representatives to the 38-member Baghdad City Council.

Although some at first objected to a woman being on the council, Hadi persuaded them to accept her. Councilmembers later voted to send her to the City Council as well.

"This is the first time we do this. The Americans let us do this—a real democracy," she said.

The room they meet in was once a hospital used by officials of the former government. It was badly damaged by looters after the war, so USAID and U.S. civil affairs troops provided furniture, electricity, new paint, windows, and security.

When a couple of councilmembers began



Ben Barber, USAID

Shatha Hadi, at a meeting of the Karkh Council, one of nine in Baghdad set up with U.S. aid.

shouting opinions, appearing to be angry enough to come to blows, she explains with a smile: "Don't worry—that is the Iraqi way."

Shouting soon gives way to calm debate, and the meeting adjourns peacefully.

U.S. aid pays councilmembers \$60 per month, but Hadi expects this amount to increase to \$120 next month.

The councils are advisory: they allow Iraqis to tell the CPA what people want done in their neighborhoods.

"Many people say you now work for the Americans," said Hadi. "Some say Saddam will kill me. I say I did nothing that was not correct. I say I work for my people." ★

Power Plant Restored After Fire

BASRAH, Iraq—Yarob Jassim strides over to the spaghetti-like tangle of electric power cables and shouts encouragement at workers at Hartha, southern Iraq's largest electric power plant. The plant is being fixed with U.S. aid after a fire in early September.

The plant had also been looted in the aftermath of the war to oust Saddam Hussein.

Jassim, Director General of southern Iraq's electric power company, said the fire began in power cables that had been soaking in fuel oil since the 1991 Gulf War. The fire spread underground, shorting out key transformers and damaging the mammoth 30-year-old 400-megawatt power plant.

Since the fire, Basrah neighborhoods have had power only a few hours per day.

The U.S.-funded Research Triangle Institute, charged with improving essential services at the local level, jumped in quickly after the fire, providing money to buy tools, equipment, cables, and other assistance.

Electric power has been vital to calming tensions in Basrah. Riots broke out after power cuts to the local refinery caused a gasoline shortage. The problem was caused by looting or sabotage of power transmission cables.

British coalition forces rushed to repair the transmission lines and set up Iraqi police to guard them, restoring gasoline production and easing tensions.



Ben Barber, USAID

Yarob Jassim, director general of southern Iraq's electric power company.

Long-term repair efforts for the region's badly neglected power sector are being provided by USAID through a contract with the Bechtel company, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Combined Joint Task Force-7, and the Iraqi Electricity Commission. ★