

# FRONT LINES



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MARCH 2004

**"I don't mind [threats] because I did something great for the women. I received compliments and praise from Iraqi women and from American women, and for that I am very proud."**



**DR. RAJAA HABIB KHUZAI**  
Iraq Governing Council,  
Speaking at USAID  
headquarters March  
12, 2004, about her  
resolution restoring  
women's rights

## Sudan Accused of 'Ethnic Cleansing'

Despite progress in talks to end the 20-year civil war in southern Sudan, fighting between Arab and African groups has increased in western Sudan in recent weeks. The fighting has created "the major humanitarian crisis in the world today," said Roger Winter, assistant administrator for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance.

"It's the same African-Arab dynamic you see in the rest of Sudan," said Winter, who added that when he flew over the region he

▼ SEE SUDAN ON PAGE 15

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## One Year Later Iraq Aid Fixes Schools, Power, Water

In the year since USAID's Iraq aid teams mobilized on March 16, 2003, they have helped carry out the largest U.S. foreign reconstruction task since the end of World War II. Some \$3.2 billion has been awarded in grants and contracts, and major work will continue well into the next year and beyond.

"Our greatest accomplishment in this first year is that we helped the U.S. military and diplomats bring normalcy and stability because we immediately started work on schools, water, electricity, financial stability, and local governance," said Ross

Wherry, head of the Iraq Reconstruction Team.

Allowing children and parents to follow their everyday routines gave stability essential for the larger political tasks facing the U.S. Coalition Provisional Authority and the U.S. Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, as they tried to create a democratic government after 24 years of Saddam Hussein's dictatorship.

"We put \$2 billion of assistance into Iraq in six months. It's the largest aid program by USAID since the Marshall Plan," said Wherry. ★

▼ SEE MISSION ON PAGE 3

### AFGHAN WOMEN COME OUT OF THE SHADOWS

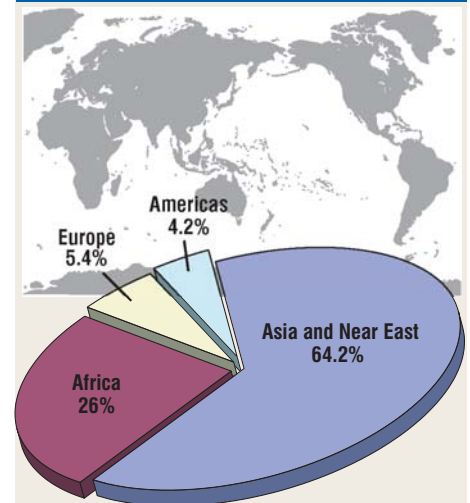


*An Afghan woman conducting a home survey lifts her veil as she speaks to residents, an act that might have earned her a beating before the Taliban government was ousted in 2001. The photo is part of an exhibit "Out of the Shadows," which is on display at the USAID Information Center on the mezzanine level of the Ronald Reagan Building. Photos focus on the role of women in Afghan society at home, in school, at work, and in leadership.*

www.usaid.gov Keyword: Afghanistan

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### ESTIMATED INCIDENCE OF TB BY REGION, 2002



In 2002, Asia and the Near East had 64.2% of all estimated TB cases.  
Source: WHO Report, 2004

▼ SEE TUBERCULOSIS ON PAGE 2

## Haiti Aid Resumes

**PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti**—USAID's American employees were beginning to return to Haiti in mid-March as security improved after the departure of former President Aristide. He left Haiti hours before rebel troops entered the capital.

A new interim government was sworn in and security partially restored by a Multinational Intervention Force led by U.S. troops.

"American staff are trickling back," said Mission Director David Adams by phone from the capital, Port-au-Prince.

Eleven of USAID's 14 employees left Haiti as law and order broke down, leaving Adams and two others to maintain the mission, sleeping at times in the ambassador's residence for safety.

▼ SEE HAITI ON PAGE 15

## Borlaug Calls for New Roads

Green Revolution founder Norman Borlaug said in an interview on his 90th birthday that to defeat world hunger new roads must be built in poor countries to deliver cheap fertilizer and pave the way for schools and health care.

The winner of the 1970 Nobel Peace Prize for creating high-yield wheat also said the

▼ SEE BORLAUG ON PAGE 14

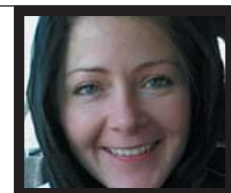
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# TB Strikes 8 Million Worldwide Annually

Tuberculosis (TB), a curable illness once thought beaten in some parts of the world, has surged in recent years. USAID responded by increasing funding from \$10 million five years ago to \$75 million this year as part of massive international efforts to fight this curable disease.

Eight million new TB cases are reported, and 2 million people die of the disease, each year. Nearly a third of the world's population is infected with "latent" TB, which can develop into active TB disease during a person's lifetime. Asia and Africa contain 80 percent of all TB cases.

Poverty and weak healthcare systems in developing countries are the main reasons for the rise of TB. The disease most commonly affects people between the ages of 15 and 54, so death and lost productivity due to TB pose a serious development problem.

In 1998, the increase in TB cases led international health agencies to unite their efforts under the global Stop TB Partnership, which now has more than 200 members.

USAID, a founding member of the partnership, fights TB in 34 countries, including India, Indonesia, Bangladesh,

Nigeria, Pakistan, and South Africa. All highly populous countries, they are among the 22 countries with the highest rates of TB, and they account for 80 percent of global TB infection.

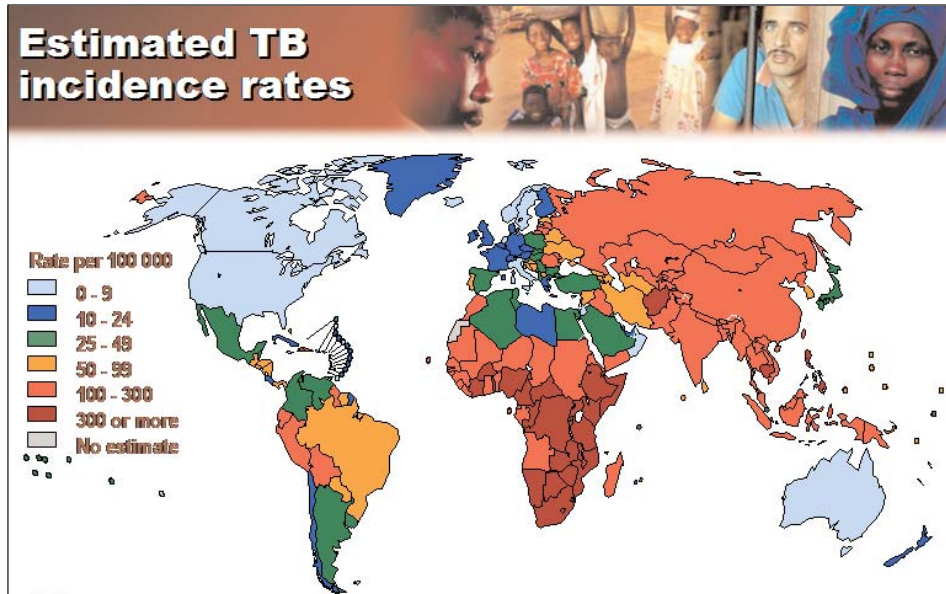
TB is airborne and is transmitted by the cough or sneeze of sick persons. Poor countries are most seriously affected.

The resurgence of TB has been fueled by the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. The HIV virus weakens the human immune system, making it easier to contract transmittable diseases such as TB or to progress from latent TB infection to active TB disease.

The most important element of USAID's strategy to fight TB is the expansion and strengthening of directly observed treatment, short-course (DOTS) programs, said Susan Bacheller, team leader for TB at USAID's Bureau for Global Health.

DOTS programs, which are recommended by the World Health Organization, identify TB patients, provide them with drugs, and ensure an uninterrupted supply of the drugs until they are cured.

A key to the program's success is that healthworkers "directly observe" that patients actually take their medicine daily



The burden of TB is distributed very unevenly: 22 countries account for 80 percent of all TB cases.

until the full treatment is completed, and they do not stop too soon when symptoms disappear.

USAID shares the objective of the Stop TB Partnership, which is to detect 70 percent of TB cases and treat 85 percent of

them successfully. The agency is training healthcare workers in the public and private sector and NGOs to fight TB, while investing in the development of new diagnostics and treatment regimens. ★

## What Is Multiple-Drug Resistant TB?

When tuberculosis (TB) patients don't take their medication consistently and for long enough, resistance to the drugs can develop.

Drug-resistant TB is common in countries such as the former Soviet Union, Israel, and South Africa, where "first line" drugs against TB were extensively used but not taken as prescribed.

In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, drug-resistant TB is 10 times more prevalent than elsewhere.

The cost of drug-resistant TB is high, both to the individual patient and society. While first-line drugs used to treat a simple case cost about \$10, "second line" drugs to treat multiple-drug resistant TB (MDR-TB) are up to 100 times more expensive. They also have no guarantee of success.

In addition, testing for and treating MDR-TB requires a more sophisticated medical infrastructure, including well-equipped laboratories, skilled technicians, and specialized doctors. For instance, if a patient has a drug-resistant strain, lab technicians need to run tests to identify the drugs the strain resists. Treatment is then tailored to the strain with a combination of other drugs. Physicians must closely monitor the patient's reaction, since this combination can be more toxic than first-line drugs.

Global medical experts fear that TB will develop resistant strains faster than new TB drugs can be developed. As the World Health Organization (WHO) reported March 17, 79 percent of MDR-TB cases do not respond to three of the four most common drugs that have been used.

WHO has developed new guidelines for



Gary Hampton, WHO

Jaco, who has MDR-TB, is in Brooklyn Chest Hospital, Cape Town.

treating MDR-TB, but it advocates an expansion and strict adherence to the current TB treatment—directly observed treatment, short-course or DOTS—to keep the spread of MDR-TB at bay, said Irene Koek, USAID's division chief for infectious diseases in the Bureau for Global Health.

DOTS helps prevent MDR-TB because medical personnel watch patients to ensure they take their daily medication and finish the six-month regimen.

Another DOTS principle is to examine sputum under a microscope to detect TB. Other tests, such as lung x-rays, are more expensive, less specific, and potentially harmful to patients. In the former Soviet Union, x-ray tests were commonly used to detect the disease.

In the United States, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported March 18 that foreign-born TB patients are twice as likely to suffer from MDR-TB than patients born in the United States. Foreign-born residents generally account for more than half of all TB cases in the United States. ★

## Directly Observed TB Treatment Saves Nearly 300,000 in India

**NEW DELHI**—Since 1997, India's healthcare system has used directly observed treatment to diagnose and treat record numbers of TB patients, saving more than 290,000 lives. The World Health Organization (WHO) chose India as the site of its worldwide TB conference in March 2004 to showcase its successful adoption of DOTS, or directly observed treatment, short-course.

Today, the treatment reaches 80 percent of India's more than 1 billion people. This is "a brilliant piece of public health," said Christopher Barrett, USAID/India's point person for TB.

Though the rapid expansion of DOTS and improved detection increased the work load dramatically, the treatment enables about 84 percent of diagnosed TB cases to be cured.

Maintaining quality care is the biggest challenge, according to Barratt. He said 100 WHO consultants "travel constantly" to make sure their assigned districts have an uninterrupted supply of TB drugs and implement DOTS correctly. The consultants are highly skilled Indian medical professionals who report to the health ministry in New Delhi and WHO in Geneva. They provide one of several quality-control mechanisms, Barratt said.

Annually, India accounts for almost one-third of the world's new TB cases; 168 people per 100,000 have TB, and about 370,000 Indians die from the disease annually.

Since the 1990s, the Indian government, medical schools, the private sector, and several international donors have equipped laboratories and trained technicians and medical practitioners to diagnose and treat TB.

Between 1998 and 2003, USAID provided \$13.2 million for equipment, training, and policy assistance. The mission focused

on four states—Haryana, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh.

In Haryana, USAID helped equip and establish 135 centers with microscopes, lab tables, and supplies for collecting and testing sputum samples. USAID also worked with private medical associations and seven medical school faculties to build DOTS into curricula. In turn, the seven colleges are working with 173 other medical schools in India to teach DOTS to young doctors.

One of the Agency's first investments in the 1990s DOTS program was support for the Tuberculosis Research Center at Chennai (formerly called Madras), which introduced DOTS in the southern state of Tamil Nadu in 1993. The center carefully documented the effectiveness of DOTS and helped convince the Indian government to go nationwide with the program.

The center, which USAID still supports, contributes regularly to domestic and foreign medical journals on its work, including its contributions to preventing TB infection among the HIV-positive and monitoring and treating multiple-drug resistant TB. ★



P. Viot, WHO

This family had DOTS treatment at a dispensary in New Delhi.



FIRST PERSON



**“Mom picks the tomatoes every other day and I fill the tank.”**

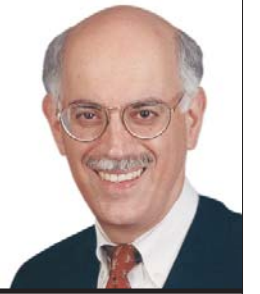
OMID, 12, IN THE LUSH GARDEN OF THE FAMILY COMPOUND IN KABUL'S CHARASIAB DISTRICT, AFGHANISTAN

Matt Herrick, Chemonics

Omid's family is one of 56 benefiting from a USAID program that brought drip irrigation to the Afghan provinces of Kabul and Parwan. More than one-third of the families selected for the project rely solely on drip systems to produce consumable crops. Women and children were introduced to the system because they are more likely to have time during the day to cultivate gardens. The women attended training sessions delivered by local NGO partners and drip irrigation experts.

Notes from Natsios

★★★★★★★★



THE WHITE PAPER

The President's 2002 National Security Strategy recognized for the first time the critical role of development, placing it on equal footing with diplomacy and defense in our U.S. foreign policy. Our report, *Foreign Aid in the National Interest*, published in 2003, challenged the development community to face the major new issues confronting us in the 21st century.

Given the current intense interest in the role and effectiveness of foreign aid, I felt it was incumbent on USAID to take the next step and address head-on the challenge of how we improve overall aid effectiveness and policy coherence in today's rapidly changing world.

To initiate this important discussion of how U.S. foreign assistance can better respond to the dynamics of the world we live in today, we have published a provocative paper, *U.S. Foreign Aid: Meeting the Challenge of the Twenty-First Century*. The White Paper was prepared largely by the career staff of the Agency. While the effort was led by the intellectual and organizational energy of the Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination, many others, including mission directors, contributed to the paper.

The paper's starting point is this: in light of the threats to national security in the post-Cold War, post-9/11 world, U.S. foreign assistance must address more than development and humanitarian goals. It must respond to the conditions of instability and insecurity that arise from terrorism, transnational crime, failing states, and global disease.

The paper also recognizes that many agencies of the U.S. government are now involved in foreign assistance, not solely USAID.

Given this broadened role of U.S. foreign assistance, the paper posits that there are five core operational goals for foreign assistance: promoting transformational development, strengthening fragile states, promoting humanitarian relief, supporting U.S. geostrategic interests, and mitigating global and transnational ills.

The paper then suggests guiding principles and approaches for each of these areas.

The analysis builds on many of the lessons learned about development in the last 50 years, much of which was encapsulated in the Monterrey Consensus. In particular, it reflects the understanding that host countries are largely responsible for their own development and, where commitment and leadership are present, country-led programming should prevail.

Similarly, donors should be selective in allocating development resources, concentrating them in stronger performers where

Mission of the Month

IRAQ

The Challenge

Agency staff in Iraq had to carry out the largest U.S. foreign aid program since the post-World War II Marshall Plan. Despite hostile efforts by Saddam Hussein loyalists and Islamist jihadists, the mission and its contractors established secure working and living conditions while living in a pioneering environment. Initially, men and women shared rooms, lived in trailers, and endured 120 degree heat without air conditioning.

Security concerns meant that staff had to remain inside safe areas such as Baghdad's Green Zone or Basra's airport. Staffers were unable to move around or participate in the daily life of the Iraqi people unless they were accompanied by protection and traveled in reinforced vehicles. Only in the Kurdish northern cities such as Erbil could staffers stay in hotels and visit restaurants and markets.

Innovative USAID Response

The key to the Iraq operation is governance, said Ross Wherry of the Iraq Reconstruction Team. "Rather than a humanitarian patch, we are trying to solve the problems," he said.

National ministries were quickly up and running after postwar looting. The Agency's Office of Transition Initiatives helped provide "Ministries in a Box," which gave more than 20 officials in each ministry the desks, chairs, computers, and basic materials needed to start work.

Local governments were quickly set up in cities and Iraq's 18 governorates. Councils were generally seen as legitimate, and those serving on them—men and women, clerics and businessmen—learned to work together and compromise as they allocated small budgets to traffic problems, street lights, clinics, schools, police, computers, trash collection, and other local needs.

USAID helped create a sense of normalcy by making sure Iraqi children would not miss a year of education: fixing 2,300 schools, opening schools within six weeks, holding matriculation exams, printing 8.7 million new math and science textbooks, and training 32,000 teachers.

Results

Other top achievements of USAID's 80 staffers and more than 700 contractors in Iraq over the past year include the following.

- The public food distribution system was kept in operation, and USAID's Office of Food for Peace sent 500,000 tons of grain.

- Electricity, water, and sewerage were restored to pre-conflict levels within six months by Bechtel and other USAID contractors.



Thomas Hartwell, USAID

*Iraqi engineers monitor controls at the Baghdad South power plant. USAID is funding the repair of Iraq's nationwide electrical system. Baghdad South, like many other power facilities, is in great disrepair. Iraqi plant managers were forced to keep plants online at any cost, often foregoing maintenance and safety procedures.*

- Infant deaths were reduced. USAID helped vaccinate 3 million children and helped repair and equip more than 600 healthcare facilities.

- Women's centers were created to provide job training and combat domestic violence. Women voters and candidates were escorted to the local council elections. The concerns of war widows are being addressed.

- Financial stability is being created. USAID assisted the Coalition Provisional Authority's program to replace old currency bearing Saddam's portrait with new dinar bills that have increased in value over the past six months. The Central Bank of Iraq was put back on its feet. A USAID contractor set up financial information and government accounting systems that will help the IMF and World Bank begin programs in 2004.

- Three major bridges linking the country's highways were repaired by Bechtel. Gasoline production resumed as electricity and security were provided to refineries and pipelines.

- Wired telephone service was restored.

- USAID dredged the deepwater port at Umm Qasr, removing shipwrecks dating from the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq War. Each month, 50 oceangoing ships carrying grain and other goods dock at the port. ★

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



# Demographic and Health Surveys Still Track Fertility and Health Trends After 30 Years

When other countries or development agencies want to understand how to help poor families improve health, reduce family size, or prevent diseases such as HIV/AIDS, they often turn to USAID's demographic and health surveys.

During the past 30 years, the Agency supported more than 250 such surveys. They were done by the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and its predecessor, the World Fertility Surveys (WFS). Currently, 20 surveys are underway.

USAID's survey support began in the early 1970s. Population and reproductive health surveys collected detailed maternal and family health statistics in five-year cycles in dozens of developing countries.

The surveys used standardized key questions and methodology, thus allowing policymakers to monitor population and health trends and understand what is behind them.

Surveys in a country are often repeated to observe trends. The 2002–03 Indonesia DHS was the seventh survey USAID has helped fund. The 2002–03 Indonesia DHS was cofunded by the Agency, but mainly by the Indonesian government, which contributed with the help of a World Bank loan. Locally trained fieldworkers interviewed nearly 40,000 urban and rural families.

By tagging such information, DHS data can illustrate a problem, track its improvement or worsening, evaluate program effectiveness, and allow reliable cross-country comparisons.

The data help local governments and development organizations, said Richard Cornelius, senior policy advisor for health at USAID's Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination. Cornelius, a demographer by training, joined USAID in 1974 to work on WFS and later designed and managed the DHS project until 1993.



Measure DHS

The 1998 Demographic and Health Survey in Togo was the second carried out in that West African country. Carefully trained Togolese interviewers visited women of reproductive age (15–49) in their households to collect a wide range of demographic and health data for use by program planners and policymakers in Togo. Periodic national sample surveys in developing countries measure the effectiveness of health programs and identify the needs of specific subgroups within the population.



Measure DHS

Demographic and Health Surveys have assisted organizations in Egypt with implementation of several national sample surveys. High response rates (typically 99 percent for women of reproductive age) reflect the careful training of Egyptian interviewers. Quality checks are maintained throughout the survey to ensure accuracy.

“It highlights for national leaders the extent of population and health-related problems facing their countries. Often it's one of the few sources of data that give a fully national picture on key indicators of health and social wellbeing,” Cornelius said.

“The data also help international development organizations like USAID see how one country compares to another, and get a sense of the impact of health interventions we're funding,” he added.

The positive impact of birth spacing on the health of women and children (see related story on page 7) is one of the global lessons learned from USAID's investment in surveys over more than three decades.

A demographic survey costs about \$750,000, though some cost more than \$1

million. Most are done in countries where USAID has missions.

As capabilities and economic conditions improved, countries such as Colombia, Mexico, and Thailand are performing their own demographic and health surveys.

Today, a demographic survey takes 12–18 months to complete. But when old mainframe computers were still in use, it took up to five years to complete the surveys under the WFS, the predecessor of DHS.

WFS, which ran from 1972 to 1984, completed surveys in 41 developing countries and 20 developed countries. At the time, the WFS was touted as the largest demographic research project ever undertaken. ★

[www.measuredhs.com](http://www.measuredhs.com)

## HIV/AIDS Causes Lifespans to Decline in Southern Africa

The HIV/AIDS epidemic in southern Africa has lowered the average life expectancy to less than 50 years, a level unseen since the 19th century.

In South Africa, for instance, the average life expectancy in 2002 was 48.8 years. By 2010, the average lifespan could drop to 36.5 years. Without the ravages of HIV/AIDS, life expectancy in South Africa would have been about 67 years, according to *The AIDS Pandemic in the 21st Century*, a USAID report.

Lower life expectancy is one consequence of the pandemic. Child mortality has increased and, more significantly, South Africa may soon reach the point where more of its citizens die than are born each year.

Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, and Mozambique will also begin to experience negative population growth by the end of the decade.

Children are among the hardest hit by HIV/AIDS. In 2000, South Africa had 1.2 million orphans; by 2010 it will have 3.5 million.

According to *Children on the Brink*, a USAID report released in 2002, about 40 percent of HIV/AIDS orphans were born with the disease. By 2010, the report states, an estimated 25 million children under 15 will have lost one or both parents to AIDS and complicating illnesses.

Just 20 years ago, few medical or population experts predicted the catastrophic effect

HIV/AIDS would have on population growth. *The AIDS Pandemic in the 21st Century* notes: “That over 30 percent of adults would be living with HIV/AIDS in any country was unthinkable.” Given current rates, “many more millions of individuals will die due to AIDS over the next decade than have over the past two decades. Many of the southern African countries are only beginning to see the impact of these high levels of HIV prevalence.”

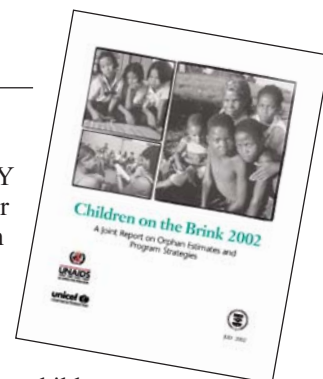
Current populations trends in southern Africa are expected to continue.

By 2020 there will be more men than women in the region, a factor that increases the incidence of violence against women. A South Africa demographic and health survey

is now underway.

USAID's FY 2003 budget for HIV/AIDS in South Africa was \$22.9 million. The program focused on preventing mother-to-child transmission, voluntary counseling and testing, care and support for people and their families living with HIV/AIDS, prevention campaigns, and pilot treatment programs in the private sector. The budget will be significantly increased as part of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

[http://www.dec.org/pdf\\_docs/PNACP816.pdf](http://www.dec.org/pdf_docs/PNACP816.pdf)





# DHS Surveys Helped Bangladesh Track and Reduce Rate of Population Growth

Bangladesh today is home to 138 million people, but it could have had a much larger population if it had not adopted family planning 20 years ago.

The country, which is the size of Wisconsin, could have been home to more than 450 million people by 2050, if it had not adopted family planning. As is, the Bangladeshi population will only grow to 255 million by 2050.

Demographic and health surveys (DHS) backed by USAID helped Bangladesh shape its policies and led the Agency to support health and education programs that promoted contraception.

The USAID-funded 1975 Bangladesh Fertility Survey found that almost 68 percent of mothers either did not want their last pregnancy or any more children. Still, only 13 percent of respondents had ever used any method of contraception.

In 1976, the Dhaka government declared rapid population growth as the country's number one problem and adopted a family planning program that USAID supported.

Since then, the average number of children a Bangladeshi woman can expect to have over her lifetime has dropped from 6.3 to 3.3, according to DHS.

As the population growth rate fell, Bangladesh's economy has grown slowly. Smaller families mean more resources for family members. More people can send their children to school and afford healthcare.

Smaller families create what is called a "virtuous circle." Educated children grow up to have higher paying jobs. They, in turn, have smaller families who are better provided for.

But change comes slowly. Some 45 percent of the population live below the poverty line, unemployment is high, state-owned enterprises inefficient, and social service institutions weak.

The decline in population growth is attrib-

uted to increased use of contraception and availability of family planning. Contraceptive prevalence has grown from 8 percent of married women of reproductive age in 1975 to 54 percent in 1999. The pill is the most popular contraception method.

"When you talk to women in Bangladesh, they can tell you that family planning has changed everything," said Margaret Neuse, director of the Office of Population/Reproductive Health. "They can do more, they can get jobs, enjoy their families. Family planning has generated a major change in women's status in terms of education, access to credit, and employment."

USAID helped the Ministry of Health hire about 40,000 women health advisors in rural communities. They work at satellite clinics that the Agency helped create that offer condoms, contraceptive pills, and healthcare services.

In urban areas, USAID has been educating Bangladeshis about family planning through ads in the mass media. In rural areas, the message is spread by the women from the Ministry of Health, who visit villages and hold workshops for mothers and girls soon to marry. Local religious leaders have also been helping educate people about the benefits of family planning.

Women typically get contraceptives from health clinics. They are encouraged to make regular visits to such clinics and get frequent health checkups, especially if they are pregnant or have small children. USAID supports 278 such clinics run by local NGOs throughout the country.

Commercial sales of contraceptives and other health supplies are also improving. Condoms and pills are available at small shops. An estimated 40 percent of Bangladeshi women obtain family planning through such shops, which are backed by USAID. ★



CCP/Photoshare

A family welfare assistant shares information with villagers in Bangladesh.

## A TALE OF TWO COUNTRIES: PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH

In 1970, Pakistan and Bangladesh had roughly equivalent fertility levels and population sizes—in fact, fertility was slightly higher in Bangladesh (6.4 compared to 6.3 in Pakistan). Because differing family planning paths were taken, significant differences have already emerged.

- In 2000, Bangladesh, which encouraged family planning, had 138 million people, while Pakistan, which did not invest as heavily in family planning, had 143 million.
- Bangladesh is projected to grow to 208 million by 2025 and to 255 million by 2050, while Pakistan is projected to grow to 250 million by 2025 and to 349 million by 2050.

# Demographic and Health Surveyors Brave Floods and Epidemics to Get the Facts

The neat columns of statistics and graphs that show developing-country population growth in Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) come after long and difficult work, far from computers or even electricity.

DHS surveyors brave floods, malaria, and sheer distance to get to assigned districts. To ensure that a survey captures national trends accurately, sampled districts must mirror the geography and other characteristics of the population as a whole.

In Nepal, surveyors have had to be transported by helicopter over mountain passes. In remote areas of Bolivia, surveyors travel by mule or boat for up to two days to reach a handful of households.

"They work very hard," said Ann Way,

deputy director of the MEASURE DHS project and a 20-year veteran of international demographic and health surveys. "It never ceases to amaze me."

MEASURE DHS works with local organizations to train men and women to approach people in their homes and ask questions—often sensitive ones—about their health, children, miscarriages, or occasionally even about abuse experienced inside the family.

"Women interview women, men interview men," said Way. Qualifications vary by country. For instance, it can be hard to find women with postsecondary education in some countries. In other places, where multiple languages are spoken, bilingual

and trilingual surveyors are the norm.

Before surveyors arrive in a district, the local group—usually the national statistical office—will tell district officials to expect them. Radio and television will be used to explain the survey and provide legitimacy before surveyors begin to knock on doors.

Surveyors practice interviewing techniques, on each other as well as on ordinary people in districts not being sampled.

Getting the introduction down is key to getting the surveyor over the threshold, said Way. Surveyors show a photo ID and a letter explaining the purpose of the survey. Respondents are told they have the right to refuse to answer a question and that all their answers are confidential.

In most countries, respondents are very willing to cooperate—the response rate generally is 95–99 percent. Overall, "respondents feel they are contributing something" that will benefit women and children's health, Way said.

In many surveys, the work goes beyond asking questions. Height and weight measures of children under 5 are taken to evaluate their nutritional status. To test for anemia, HIV, or other medical conditions, surveyors may prick a respondent's finger and place a drop of blood on filter paper. In some cases, a bigger blood sample is drawn.

"We almost always use medical professionals" when bigger samples are drawn, Way said. ★



## ECONOMIC GROWTH, AGRICULTURE, AND TRADE

## Black Sea Fishermen Increase Sales



World Lab

*Fish caught in the Black Sea by the Azov Sea Basin Association's fleet are kept in a refrigerated warehouse built for association members, who increased exports after they learned how to comply with European quality and safety standards.*

Under a USAID program carried out by two U.S. universities, Ukrainian fishermen on the Black Sea are learning to ice their catch quickly and fish in greater safety, and Nicaraguan onion farmers are getting advice on upgrading their crops.

Louisiana State University (LSU) is helping improve the quality of meat, seafood, and poultry in Ukraine and Moldova. Michigan State University (MSU) is working to improve the quality of fruits and vegetables in Ghana, Kenya, Nicaragua, and Guatemala.

These are two examples of the Partnerships for Food Industry Development (PFID), set up through USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade (EGAT).

PFID aims to help small and medium-sized farmers in poor countries adopt food processing and marketing technologies that make their products easier to export to the United States and Europe.

PFID also promotes policies in host countries that widen access to international markets and increase the value of their agricultural products.

PFID began in 2000 and runs at least through 2005. Missions in countries where it operates have shown interest in taking over the program or including aspects of it in their own projects.

Small fisheries in Ukraine turned to USAID and LSU for help because they needed information about the EU's safety and hygiene standards for exports and, in any case, couldn't afford to meet them.

LSU helped form the Azov Sea Basin Association to enable Black Sea fisheries to sell their catch in several European markets. The fisheries lowered costs, eliminated mid-

dlemen, and increased profits. Association members also learned how to comply with standards such as keeping fish cold from the moment caught.

After PFID informed Ukrainian lawmakers about the need for tougher safety requirements, the government tightened meat and fish regulations to meet EU standards.

In Nicaragua, the USAID-funded MSU pilot project is helping 82 small and medium-sized onion farmers learn about new technologies and U.S. food safety standards. With the project's assistance, some 45 percent of the onions these farmers grow are exported to the United States between January and March, when U.S. production of fresh onions does not satisfy the country's needs.

Keystone Marketing Inc., the main U.S. buyer of the onions, distributes produce to U.S. companies such as WalMart. For the Nicaragua project, Keystone Marketing is providing its own expert to verify safety and quality and start a certification process for the Nicaraguan sweet onions.

PFID also trained Latin American officials on the food safety requirements of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency. The officials learned to identify pesticides banned or limited by these agencies.

"This program is giving the Nicaraguans first-hand information on U.S. regulatory and private-company requirements so they can export their products," said Carol Wilson, an EGAT agricultural trade advisor. "If they don't meet the requirements, their products are not allowed in the United States." ★

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

## GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

## King Backs Jordan Internet Centers

**AMMAN, Jordan**—King Abdullah II is working to transform Jordan into a knowledge-based economy. He started a program backed by USAID that created 75 public "knowledge stations." The stations provide public walk-in access to internet-linked PCs, fax machines, photocopiers, and other multimedia technology services. Some are housed in government offices, others with NGOs.

The network of stations is one of many programs contributing to the Jordanian government's initiative, "Connecting Jordanians." By 2006, a broadband learning and public access network will link all schools, colleges, universities, and telecenters in the country.

**"We are proud to partner with USAID and AMIR to support King Abdullah's vision to make Jordan the leading technology hub for the region."**

STEVE CASE, FORMER CHAIRMAN AND CEO, AMERICA ONLINE, INC. AND AOL TIME WARNER

The initiative, launched in October 2000 with the king's personal funds, now involves USAID, a host of other donor agencies, and several foundations. One is

the Case Foundation of Steve Case, the cofounder of America Online.

USAID and the Case Foundation each contributed \$250,000 to the knowledge station program.

The program includes training courses that cover topics ranging from basic computer literacy to advanced technology skills. More than 37,000 Jordanians have enrolled, and more than 60 percent of those receiving computer training are women.

Staff and interns at the knowledge stations teach participants how to develop and use information and communication technology (ICT) skills to improve their businesses, tap into healthcare information, participate in e-government, and learn about social issues.

In February 2004, 450 government employees graduated from a training program on how to incorporate e-government practices into their work.

The knowledge station initiative is one of five activities of USAID's "Achieving Market-Friendly Initiatives and Results" (AMIR) project. NetCorps Jordan, another AMIR program, offers technology and business training to the interns who assist clients in the knowledge stations. AMIR, implemented in partnership with Jordan's private sector and government, is now devising ways to make the internet stations financially self-sustaining. ★

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



The Case Foundation

*Jordanian women gain basic computer and internet skills at one of 75 knowledge stations established through the Connecting Jordanians initiative.*



## DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

## Agency Helps Congo Assist Rape Victims



Leah Werchick, USAID

Women successfully reintegrated into their communities assemble in a "paillote de paix" (peace hut) near Walungu, South Kivu.

**KINSHASA, Congo**—In a small village in the province of North Kivu, a woman in her 50s ties a cloth around the lower half of her face before going out.

Two years ago a group of armed men, some of whom she recognized from her own village, attacked her family, killed her husband, and raped her.

She denounced the attackers publicly, expecting village elders to take action and bring her attackers to justice. Instead, they returned, assaulted her again, and cut her lips as a warning for her to keep quiet.

In January 2004, the woman decided to tell her story to a visiting USAID assessment team who took advantage of a rare opportunity to visit 12 sites in the remote region in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Some of the sites have been unreachable during the past decade of conflict.

Rape in Congo is both a weapon and a consequence of war. Tens of thousands of women, children, and men have been raped over the past decade. At one point, armies and militias from eight countries in the region were involved in the turmoil.

Sexual violence in eastern Congo was reported in 1991 during crossborder hostilities but became more frequent in 1994, when hundreds of thousands of Rwandan Hutus fled across the border into eastern Congo to escape retribution for the genocide of an estimated 800,000 Tutsis.

Fighters from Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda still pillage villages in eastern Congo. Virtually all of the armies, militias, and gangs involved in the conflicts have participated in these acts.

Removing foreign troops and accelerating disarmament and reintegration programs are the Agency's immediate relief goals, said Marion Pratt, a social science advisor in the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance and a member of the assessment team.

The team also included health, democracy and governance, and program planning

experts, and representatives from the Office of Transition Initiatives in the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance.

In Congo, as in most African countries, rape is a taboo subject. Most victims of rape are rejected by their families, and babies born of rape are often rejected as well.

International groups have been providing health, counseling, mediation, and justice services to some victims. In 2002, USAID began similar projects to offer healthcare and counseling to some 8,000 rape victims.

Those brave enough to come forward are taken to a clinic or hospital, depending on how badly they are injured, and then referred on to counseling and socio economic services.

Rape victims who have been rejected by their families are offered mediation services that can facilitate their reacceptance. Women are also offered training in soap-making and other trades, and receive seeds and farm tools.

Legal services are also made available, although this help is most often refused. Congo's judicial system is weak, corruption rampant, and the courts and police understaffed. Victims fear retribution.

Some international groups say the best way to address the issue is to hold a few high-profile trials for some of the most notorious perpetrators.

USAID's work in Congo is successful, said Pratt, "but there is need for more training and more assistance because the scale of the problem is so enormous."

Graphic media reports about rampant sexual violence in eastern Congo have gained the attention of the U.S. Congress. There has been talk of increasing funding for programs in areas such as health, counseling, mediation, and justice.

USAID spent about \$1.95 million on such activities in FY 2003, expects to spend about \$3.3 million in FY 2004. ★

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

## GLOBAL HEALTH

## Spacing Children 3–5 Years Apart Is Best

From Nigeria's crowded cities to India's teeming villages and everywhere between, health workers are sending out a new educational message: "Wait three to five years before having another child."

Up to now, the Agency had espoused a two-year waiting period between births.

But an intensive literature review on birth spacing suggested otherwise. As a result of studies that ended in 2002, the Agency will roll out awareness campaigns in countries where the Office of Population and Reproductive Health of the Bureau for Global Health is active.

Foreign governments are already amenable to birth spacing. In Nigeria, for instance, the Ministry of Health is encouraging families to space births. The message is carried on posters and broadcast advertising. Some posters read: "Well-spaced children are every parent's joy...for the love of your family, go for child spacing today."

In India, educational posters suggest that couples wait three years before having a second child. In Nepal, posters urge couples to wait until their child is in school before having another.

The campaigns are the result of extensive USAID-funded studies that show that spacing births three to five years apart cuts the mortality rate for infants and young children by 20–30 percent. Allowing time between births also makes it more likely that mothers will survive and be healthy.

The potential public health impact is huge. In the developing world, an estimated half-million women and 10 million infants die annually from preventable, pregnancy-

related causes.

USAID is preparing to recommend that counseling and education programs let people know that birth intervals of 3–5 years are best for mothers and children. The Agency is also rolling out a training program for NGOs and health providers on how to counsel clients on birth spacing.

During the studies, researchers held discussions with women throughout Latin America and India. At one meeting in Peru one woman said, "The woman gets sick because her body gets worn out when she has children close together."

"The woman suffers if she has children close together," another chimed in.

Currently, more than half the mothers in 55 developing countries wait less than three years between births. Another 26 percent space births less than two years apart. Almost everywhere, the studies found, birth intervals are shorter than women prefer.

The studies were conducted by ORC Macro analysts, who used the latest Demographic Health Survey data from 17 countries and took into account factors such as education and income.

The studies concluded that birth intervals of three years or longer substantially decrease mortality and nutritional risks, compared to intervals of two years or less. In developing countries, three-year birth intervals were associated with fewer stillbirths, prenatal deaths, and newborn deaths, and reduced the risk of stunted and underweight infants. ★

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



C. Mayo, International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada

Studies show mothers and children are healthier when births are spaced 3–5 years apart. Parents are also better able to provide their children with basic needs.



# 'Telling Our Stories' Collects Accounts of Successes

"Telling Our Stories," a project introduced at the USAID mission director's conference in October 2003, enables each mission to recount the human side of international development, using a few quotes and photos.

In a few short months, the project collected and posted on the USAID website nearly 200 stories from all regions. The stories help the public better understand the Agency's work overseas. Each month, four new stories are featured on the website front page.

"We're trying to move away from statistics and closer to people," said Anne-

Marie DiNardo, the project officer. "We encourage the missions to use language that is easy to understand, and not USAID-speak."

"The idea behind these stories is to focus on a person or community and talk about how USAID helped them improve their lives," she added.

The following is a sample of success stories submitted by missions.

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

## HIV/AIDS Support Group Helps Hondurans Claim Their Rights



Rosa Gonzalez, Proyecto Acción SIDA de Centroamérica

*José Antonio Estrada, a member of the Genesis support group, delivers food to people living with HIV/AIDS who are taking antiretroviral therapy.*

**PUERTO CORTÉS, Honduras**—As in many other cities, people living with HIV/AIDS in Honduras's leading port have been denied medical and educational services or faced other types of discrimination.

Acción SIDA, funded by USAID, helped HIV-positive people in Puerto Cortés organize a support group of 20 members called Genesis. In 2003, the group created alliances with local health staff, media, religious groups, local authorities, and public and private schools.

"Today I can serve the people living with HIV/AIDS in my community," said José Antonio Escada, a member of Genesis. "I am familiar with the national HIV/AIDS

law and my rights. My self-esteem is higher, and I am capable and comfortable counseling my peers."

Acción SIDA encourages people to talk about their HIV-positive status and fight discrimination.

One of the group's first achievements was to open an activity center that provides individual counseling, support meetings, referral services, and occupational training. Genesis has also increased AIDS awareness in the community through advocates like Escada. Through testimonials and discussions, they are enlightening the general population about people with HIV/AIDS. ★

## Education to Provide an Alternative to Cocaine Marketing in Bolivia

**LA PAZ, Bolivia**—For centuries, Bolivia's indigenous people have grown coca leaf in the Yungas, a mountainous region northwest of the capital. In addition to chewing the leaf, they use it for religious purposes. Bolivian law recognizes their traditions by permitting up to 12,000 hectares of coca in the region.

But, in recent years, additional coca has been planted that has ended up as cocaine. The Bolivian government feels it cannot force eradication of coca planting in the Yungas because of the political and cultural sensitivities.

With this in mind, USAID started an annual scholarship program with Carmen Pampa University in 2001. The idea behind the program is to train future professionals to create a coca-free economy. The program pays for 33 students from local rural communities to pursue degrees in agricultural engineering, nursing, veterinary science, animal husbandry, and education.

Eligibility is based on previous scholastic performance and socioeconomic background. While in school, students are required to work on campus and in surrounding communities. Students are also encouraged to work in their home communities during and after their studies.

Since the program's inception, 16 participants have graduated.

In 2003, students in public health made more than 3,000 home visits, while the veterinary and agronomy students assisted about 150 families with extension projects.

For its contribution to reducing rural



Roberto Casap, Alternative Development Regional Program

*Mario Flores Flores from Villa Barrientos in the Yungas region received a USAID scholarship to study at Carmen Pampa University's veterinary school.*

poverty in Bolivia, the program was cited in the 2003 best practices report of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. ★

## New Romanian Emergency Team Is Trained to Save Lives

**DUMBRAVENI, Romania**—After his brother died as the result of a car crash while waiting for help to arrive, Radu Cristian Dumitru, 24, joined his town's first emergency response team, one trained under a USAID grant.

"I joined this program thinking of my brother, who died last year with three of his friends. I want to ensure that others stand a better chance," said Dumitru.

He is one of 10 members of a new medical emergency team in a town of 10,000 in Sibiu County. Before the team was organized, the response time in emergency cases was more than 40 minutes.

Because impoverished local governments could not provide rural communities with rapid emergency assistance, USAID

gave a \$46,000 grant to Dr. Raed Arafat to start the service.

The project created two emergency crews. They work with the firefighting departments in two communities of Sibiu County. Arafat is working with the Romanian government to set up crews in other counties.

Dumitru's training and equipment now permit him to extract victims from wreckage and revive them before ambulances arrive. He goes out on emergency calls with firefighters who the project helped to train.

The Dumbraveni team is equipped to international standards. Now cardiac arrest cases in this rural area have the same chance of survival as in cities. ★



Cornelia Bucur, GRASP

*Radu Dumitru joined the first emergency unit in his town after his brother died in a wreck.*



## Small Loan Helps Filipino Family Build Their Electrical Business



Nonita de la Beña

Nonita de la Beña and her husband expanded their store with the help of a microenterprise loan.

**MANILA, Philippines**—Albert and Nonita de la Beña are partners in more than just marriage. A year ago, they borrowed \$340 to expand their business. Shortly after, they moved their electrical store into a larger building, increased their stock, and quadrupled their daily sales.

The couple used personal savings rather than loans when they opened their store in 1996. This is typical for microentrepreneurs in countries such as the Philippines, where small businessmen find it difficult to acquire capital and many rely on informal lenders who charge up to 20 percent per month for loans.

“Interest was too high,” said Nonita de la Beña, who runs the store while her husband teaches at a nearby school.

But the de la Beñas received a loan through their local bank, the Rural Bank of Cantilan, which learned how to make prof-

itable small loans to microentrepreneurs through a USAID program.

The loan provided the de la Beñas an opportunity to expand the business without trepidation. Nonita said she appreciated the program because it “allowed us to purchase equipment upfront so that we could expand our sales while repaying the loan at reasonable interest rates.”

After just six months of diligent repayment on their first loan, the couple tripled the size of their loan. The program strictly enforces a zero tolerance policy on delinquent loans.

The Rural Bank of Cantilan also encourages all borrowers to open and maintain a savings account.

Since their initial loan, the de la Beñas have saved almost \$300. With such savings and added income, they hope to assure the futures of their four young children. ★

## TV Drama Advises Zimbabwe Youth How to Prevent HIV/AIDS

**HARARE, Zimbabwe**—*Studio 263*, sponsored by USAID to fight HIV/AIDS, is the most popular TV show in Zimbabwe, according to a recent media poll.

The drama addresses HIV prevention: the importance of self-control, self-respect, abstinence, and HIV testing. It also warns of the dangers of unprotected sex and unwanted pregnancy.

Some 88 percent of 11–29 year olds who watch TV tune in to the drama, the survey found. The TV show influenced half of the younger children and one-third of the older youth, the poll reported. Fans of the show said they have delayed the onset of sexual activity, used voluntary counseling and testing services, and discussed HIV testing with their spouse or partner.

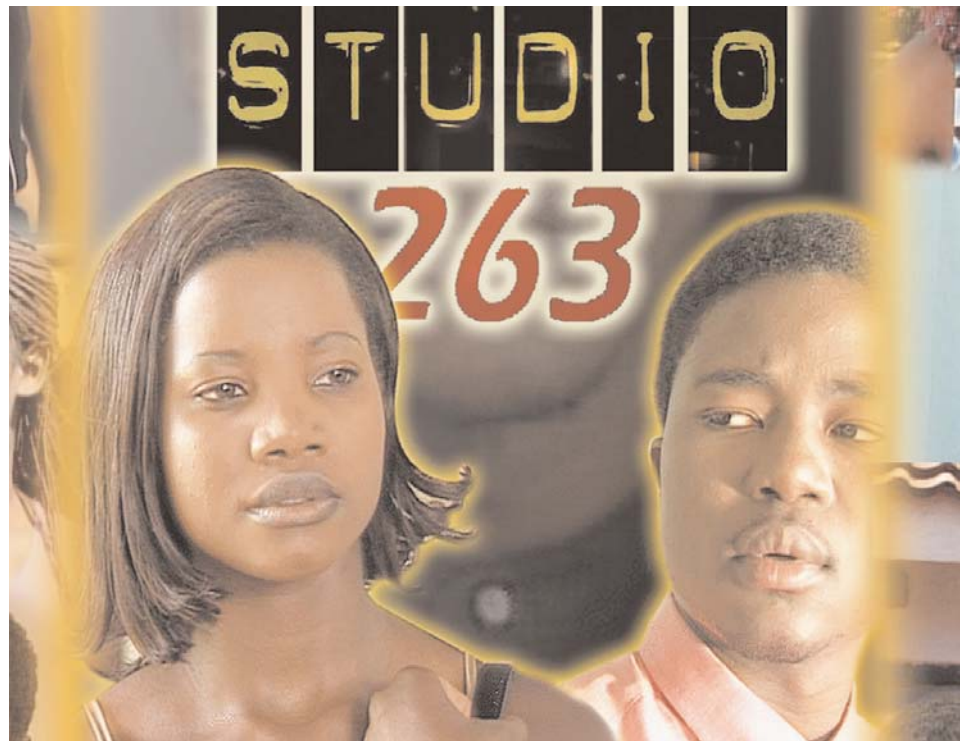
More than 24 percent of sexually active adults in Zimbabwe are HIV-infected, and an

estimated 3,290 Zimbabweans die of AIDS each week. The disease has severely reduced the country’s workforce at the same time as the country is experiencing a severe economic downturn.

The sponsorship of *Studio 263* is just one of USAID’s efforts to curtail the spread of AIDS in Zimbabwe, a nation of 12.6 million.

*Studio 263*, whose name is derived from the country’s international dialing code, is the story of Vimbai Jari, 19.

Born into a lower-middle-class family, she decides to try out for the prestigious Miss Zimbabwe pageant. The story focuses on her relentless struggle to overcome obstacles at home and work; her relationship with her boyfriend, family members, and friends; and her financial responsibilities. She eventually emerges as a confident, assertive winner—a woman of great accomplishment. ★



Studio 263

Studio 263, a USAID-sponsored TV show in Zimbabwe, is raising HIV/AIDS awareness.

## Namibian Teachers Switch from Lectures to Getting Students Involved

**OSHAKATI, Namibia**—Despite its worn desks and broken chairs, a typical classroom in this northern city is a cheerful place, displaying colorful assignments and teaching aids. Students sing songs that use English words for parts of the body; they then say the words in English as they look at pictures of the anatomy.

This interactive approach is new to Namibia, one of the few African nations within reach of achieving universal primary education. It forms part of a USAID program—in collaboration with Namibia’s Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture (MBESC)—that is reforming grades 1–4 in the nation’s poorest regions. The most significant reform is the promotion of learner-centered education, where teachers not only lecture but encourage participation in the classroom.

Reforms were introduced by establishing a

training team in each of the six regions where USAID-supported education activities are implemented. Each team has a circuit inspector, an advisory teacher, and a resource teacher to train teachers and principals.

The new teaching techniques are modeled at teacher meetings. Teachers are videotaped practicing the techniques and receive feedback from their peers and the training team.

Almost 90 percent of the schools in the six regions are now practicing learner-centered teaching. Nearly 1,500 teachers and 283 principals have been trained in the techniques. Ultimately, the initiative aims to reach over 63,000 students.

MBESC has started rolling out the approach to other schools in other regions at its own cost. The ministry wants all schools in Namibia to follow the learner-centered approach by 2010. ★



Donna Kay LeCzel, AED

Problem solving in a group at Onyaanya Primary School, Namibia. The technique is measured in school self-assessments to monitor progress toward learner-centered education.



## AFRICA

# Angolan Adults Learn to Read in Informal Schools

**LUANDA, Angola**—In this run-down capital city, a small educational group called Alfalit is teaching thousands of Angolan women to read at informal schools in churches, front yards, or under trees.

Thirty years of armed conflict forced hundreds of thousands of Angolans to flee their homes and live in makeshift housing. Even in Luanda, they had little chance of making up for lost schooling.

Angola's public education system can barely educate primary school-aged children, due to chronic underfunding, inadequate staffing, and poor infrastructure. Government literacy services for adults are rare.

When Alfalit, a local faith-based NGO, proposed the creation of 804 informal learning centers in Luanda in 2002, USAID was ready to offer support: \$800,000 for the first two years and another \$600,000 for the next two.

Of Angola's 10.7 million people, only 42 percent are literate, according to the CIA *World Factbook*. Some 56 percent of men but only 28 percent of women can read.

Angola has so many displaced people, and their needs are so great, that the program wants to do more than educate illiterate adults. It also hopes to provide jobs for those who can read and write.

Armanda Elende, a native of Huambo province, is a teacher in the program. She taught in Huambo for more than 20 years

before the war forced her to flee in 1998. She lived off charity in Luanda until Alfalit recruited her as a teacher.

Like Elende, most teachers are women who once had jobs as teachers or nurses but were displaced during the conflict.

**"Soon even old people become able to write their names and read mail from their families."**

ARMANDA ELENDE,  
TEACHER

The literacy programs last three to six months. Angola's Ministry of Education, which administers the curriculum, provides a final exam. So far, more than 25,000 students have earned a literacy certificate by graduating from Alfalit's program.

USAID supports a second adult literacy program through the Mississippi Consortium for International Development (MCID), which runs a community center where women learn basic literacy skills.

MCID works with the Centro Unesco Kuntuala, an Angolan NGO that has provided informal basic education services in local churches to 1,500 women over the past few years. Some 1,200 women are now



Joao Neves, USAID/Angola

*An Angolan woman happily attends an outdoor literacy class, one of more than 800 created by Alfalit, a local faith-based NGO, with USAID support.*

enrolled in classes at the center, which eventually expects to accommodate up to 2,500 pupils.

The center will also offer small business management training. This training is important to local economic development, given

that many of the students are street vendors and small business owners.

The Angolan Ministry of Education has promised to provide additional teachers as well as books and materials. ★

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

## LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

# 1.4 Million Displaced Colombians Get Aid

**BOGOTA, Colombia**—USAID is funding a program that creates jobs for many of the

3.1 million Colombians who have been displaced by internal armed conflict, ongoing



German Acevedo, U.S. Embassy, Bogota

*USAID is helping people displaced from rural areas by Colombia's ongoing guerrilla war find jobs and integrate into society.*

since 1985. Through the program, internally displaced persons (IDPs) are finding work at shoe factories, learning to grow flowers for sale, or getting credit to start agricultural cooperatives.

Colombia faces one of world's most severe humanitarian crises as a result of fighting fueled by narcotics production and trafficking. Much of the violence occurs in rural areas.

In 2000, USAID began a \$173 million program of humanitarian and social aid to help IDPs return to work and integrate into society.

To date, the program has reached 1.4 million IDPs, creating jobs and offering healthcare, counseling, education, housing, and other social services.

Private sector organizations participate in the program. It also includes the Colombian Association of Flower Exporters, the International Youth Foundation, the National Federation of Retailers, and NGOs that specialize in such industries as garment manufacture, auto repair, and furniture production.

Local governments and universities are also participating.

Usually, the skills IDPs have are only relevant to rural and agricultural projects.

"Income generation is one of the most—if not the most—important issue that IDPs face when they arrive in a city or another

region," said Kenneth Wiegand, USAID/Colombia's coordinator for programs relating to IDPs and child ex-combatants.

"Getting a job or creating a microenterprise allows IDPs and their families to initiate a new life in the city and address their most essential needs," he said.

The Colombian Association of Flower Exporters, for example, teaches IDPs about flower production and then hires some of them permanently.

Meanwhile, the shoe producers association offers training and temporary production jobs before the start of the school year.

Some displaced families have formed cooperatives—including a yucca processing plant, a sausage factory, and a recycling business.

The program has made about \$4.5 million in credit available to new businesses in 10 regions. It has also helped 12,000 families go back to their farms or move to other farming regions.

A main grantee of the program is the Pan American Development Foundation, which has job-creation activities in 113 municipalities.

By September 2005, this \$34 million program is expected to benefit 60,000 families. ★

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



## ASIA AND THE NEAR EAST

# Lebanon's Government Agencies Sharpen Skills

**BEIRUT, Lebanon**—Tax revenues in this capital city rising from the ashes of civil war have risen 50 percent since 2002. USAID contributed to this improvement.

The Agency has helped Beirut and other Lebanese cities and towns reform their government agencies. They learned to simplify administrative procedures, standardize budget revenue and expenditures, and use information technology.

Large municipalities opened citizen reception offices, where people can get answers to their questions or register their complaints. Other cities launched public websites.

The USAID program trained more than 1,550 employees of 600 municipalities in customer service and the use of the reengineered and automated administrative and financial procedures.

The program also published a municipal guide, which contains information about citizen rights and obligations.

As more people became aware of their tax obligations, municipal tax revenues rose dramatically. In the northern municipality of Rahbeh, for instance, the amount of tax collected went from \$48 in 2001 to \$199,313 in 2003.

The \$17 million program, implemented by the Center for Legislative Development at the State University of New York (SUNY), is also helping to reform and modernize Lebanon's parliament and oversight agencies.

The program provided parliament with a legal reference database with all Lebanese laws, decrees, and government decisions since 1920 and trained staff how to use it. Now lawmakers can make sure new laws are consistent with existing ones.

Budget systems that improve oversight were also introduced at all finance-related agencies. Legislators can review how funds were spent and make comparisons between proposed and previous budgets.

A manual provided to parliamentarians outlined the internal structure and history of the Lebanese parliament as well as the publications of the parliamentary library.

The program also introduced an electronic system that displays parliamentary votes on a wall visible to the media and the public.

The program also helped reform three oversight agencies. One is the Court of Audit (COA), which has administrative and judicial control over public expenditures. The others are the Civil Service Board (CSB) and the Central Inspection Board (CIB), which maintain government personnel records and respond to citizens' complaints about civil employees.

With USAID's help, CIB created a website that makes it easier for citizens to file complaints, and COA developed a pre-auditing system to double-check proper allocation of budget funds. ★

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



USAID helped towns and cities in Lebanon improve their work and increase their revenues. The program also trained employees in customer service.

## EUROPE AND EURASIA

# USAID Supports Open Government in Georgia

**TBILISI, Georgia**—Georgians moved ahead with post-Soviet reforms during the campaign leading up to special parliamentary elections held March 28.

Along with other donors, USAID sup-

ported monitors who reported that the elections were fair and free.

The results of parliamentary elections held November 3, 2003, were widely seen as fraudulent. This started a massive but

peaceful uprising, now called the "Rose Revolution."

In the November elections, Georgian NGOs played a key role in recording fraud. Local activists observed the voting and ballot-counting process, reporting precinct results to a national, nongovernmental structure that documented where and how fraud occurred.

Demonstrators throughout Georgia, led by then-opposition leader Mikheil Saakashvili, protested the results and crowds stormed parliament.

Eduard Shevardnadze was forced to resign, and Saakashvili became interim president. Saakashvili's presidency was confirmed by elections held January 4, when domestic and international observers reported a much improved election process.

On March 28 supporters of Saakashvili claimed an overwhelming victory in the latest parliamentary election—a vote that international observers viewed as the fairest in the country's post-Soviet history.

Though turbulent, the last few months brought renewed hope to Georgians, according to a recent survey. Some 70 percent of those polled said that they felt the country is "moving in the right direction." These results are vastly different from a similar survey in October, when 80 percent lamented that Georgia was "moving in the wrong direction."

Since Saakashvili came to power, the government has undertaken new anticorruption activities and begun restructuring. For instance, a Prime Minister's Office was created to coordinate governmental policies and day-to-day operations. The old Anticorruption Commission has been eliminated and its functions merged with the National Security Council, under the president's authority.

Two senior public officials exposed for corruption—one in the former government's tax department and another who headed the Football Federation of Georgia—paid back \$1.86 million they had embezzled from public coffers.

USAID has been assisting Saakashvili's government since the Rose Revolution by providing senior-level advisors to ministries and offices that guide policies and reforms; collect taxes on tobacco, alcohol, petroleum, and other products; and prevent smuggling of oil and gas.

Since 2002, USAID has funded many activities supporting democracy and civil society in Georgia. The Agency funded NGOs to advocate reforms, and supported the development of political parties and a free press. It invests \$9 million annually in programs in Georgia that promote greater citizen participation and more open government. ★

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



David Garibashvili, USAID/Georgia

Georgians united in peaceful protest to bring down President Eduard Shevardnadze's regime in November 2003.



February 7, 2004–March 6, 2004

## PROMOTED

Margaret R. Alexander  
 Gerald A. Cashion  
 Jatinder K. Cheema  
 Carleene H. Dei  
 Rose Marie Depp  
 Dirk W. Dijkerman  
 Karen B. Fall  
 Valrie A. Gallion  
 Linda Greiner  
 Helen K. Gunther  
 Robert G. Hellyer  
 Stephen P. Horneman  
 Andrew Katsaros  
 Carla M. Komich  
 Jeffrey A. Kramer  
 Linh Chau Lam  
 Lauren S. Mclean  
 Sheron E. Moore  
 Alexander D. Newton  
 Maxine W. Pierce  
 Christopher Pratt  
 Allan E. Reed  
 Arnisher M. Savoy  
 William B. Schaeffer  
 Rebekah Stutzman  
 Lucretia D. Taylor  
 Gordon H. West

## RETIRED

Margaret L. Caudle  
 Joyce A. Cosby  
 Deborah M. Currie  
 Sharon C. Hailstak  
 T. David Johnston  
 Diana M. Lopez  
 Delbert N. McCluskey  
 Mary Frances Moore  
 Phyllis L. Moore  
 Lorraine A. Morton  
 Pavlina M. Strom  
 Diana G. Young

## MOVED ON

Bridget Alyea  
 Chelsey Celeste Benton  
 Roy E. Brownell  
 Gordon P. Estes  
 Mary Frances Likar  
 Susan Morawetz  
 Donald L. Niss  
 Cynthia F. Rozell  
 Todd D. Sloan  
 Peter D. Smith  
 Griffin Mark Thompson  
 Eileen White  
 Ernest Wilson

## REASSIGNED

Mary A. Conboy  
 M/HR/EM to M/HR/LERPM  
 Robert M. Cull  
 Iraq/EXO to COMP/FS/REASSIGN  
 Alfreda Brewer  
 Angola to Skopje  
 Alan L. Davis  
 LAC/RSD to COMP/DETAIL/SUP  
 Charlene D. Davis  
 M/AS/CPD to M/AS/CPD  
 Karen J. Doswell  
 GC/ENI to EGAT/DC  
 Christian Hougen  
 COMP/NE/OJT to India/PS

Edith I. Houston  
 AFR/WA to AFR/SA  
 Peter T. Lampesis  
 EGAT/EIT/TT to E&E/EG/MT  
 Lewis W. Lucke  
 Iraq/OD to COMP/FS/REASSIGN  
 C. Grant Morrill  
 EGAT/EG/PSE to PPC/DEI/ESPA  
 James E. Stephenson  
 FRY to Iraq/OD  
 Stephanie R. Teasley  
 M/AS/CPD to M/AS/CPD  
 Gordon W. Weynand  
 EGAT/ENV/EET to EGAT/EIT/E

## IN MEMORIAM

**Charles D. Hyson**, 88, an economist and longtime USAID official, died March 8, 2004. He worked for USAID's predecessor agency in the late 1940s in Europe. Later, Hyson served in Portugal as counselor of embassy for economic affairs. He retired from USAID in the early 1970s after having served as a consultant on international trade and economic affairs to committees and conferences of the White House and United Nations.

**Emmalita L. Jefferson**, 56, died suddenly February 24, 2003. She began her federal government career while a senior in high school, when she worked part-time at the Federal Highway Administration. Jefferson joined USAID in 1966. She worked in six bureaus, including a temporary duty assignment to West Africa to provide humanitarian assistance. She was a budget analyst when she retired in March 2003, after 36 years of federal service.

**H. Charles "Chuck" Ladenheim**, 82, died February 4, 2004. He joined one of USAID's predecessor agencies in 1950, and worked in India, Iran, and the Philippines. His final assignment was disseminating lessons learned at USAID to other agencies and sectors. Ladenheim retired in 1977.

**David H. Miller**, 39, died on February 2, 2004. Miller was a desk officer for Angola, Namibia, and South Africa in the Bureau for Africa from 1989 to 1991. From 1991 to 1993, he worked with the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, developing investment promotion programs for U.S. businesses interested in African markets. In 1993, Miller started the Corporate Council on Africa with six corporate members and no staff. He went on to form AfricaGlobal Partners in 1999.

**Ronald H. Pollock**, 80, died December 14, 2003. He was a project officer in New Delhi, India, in 1967, and then served in South Vietnam, the Dominican Republic, and the Philippines. When he retired in 1988, Pollock was a USAID agricultural officer in New Delhi.

## NEPs and IDIs Sworn In



Administrator Natsios swore in 39 new foreign service officers March 8, 2004. Ten were accepted under the newly revived International Development Internship (IDI) program. The rest were recruited under the New Entry Professional (NEP) Program.

## Agricultural Officers

Randy Chester, Leslie Marbury, Sandra Stajka, Benjamin Swartley

## Democracy Officers

Bruce Etling, Jessica Hunter Zaman, Kelley Strickland, Susan Tatten

## Education Officer

Thomas Crehan

## Executive Officers

Edward Michalski, Barry Collins (IDI),

Markus Dausses (IDI), Victor Diaz de Leon (IDI), William Hansen (IDI), Darren Manning (IDI)

## Financial Management Officers

Douglas Balko, Walter Hammond

## Health Officers

Gregory Adams, Alisa Cameron, Julia Henn, Rachel Herr, Erik Janowsky, Marie McLeod, Monica Medrek, Tara Milani, Sangita Patel, Jonathan Ross, William Slater, Stephan Solat, Ginelle Nelson (IDI)

## Private Enterprise Officers

Luis Hernandez

## Procurement Officers

Dale Gredler, Doanh Van, Patrick Wilson

## Program and Project Officers

Lily Beshawred, Stephanie Budzina (IDI), Joseph Hirsch (IDI), Sean Huff (IDI), Katherine Osborne Valdez (IDI)



## Natsios Says 9/11 Changed Foreign Aid

The U.S. foreign aid program is moving in a “dramatic” new direction since September 11 because “we are a nation under threat and at war,” Administrator Natsios told the country’s top foreign aid experts and leaders of voluntary aid groups.

“Not only are the directions dramatically new, but the commitment is dramatically large. The budget at USAID has risen from \$7.9 billion prior to September 11 to \$14.9 billion in 2003,” Natsios said, as he introduced the Agency’s White Paper February 25 at the annual meeting of the Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACFVA), attended by more than 400 NGO representatives.

Alarmed by concerns that failed states and misery around the world help breed terrorism, President Bush declared in 2002 that

international development would “share the stage” with diplomacy and defense in U.S. foreign policy, Natsios told the packed meeting at the National Press Club.

For nearly 50 years, USAID has helped poor countries try to develop and it has seen successes and failures that “critically prepared us for the tasks ahead,” he told the development experts.

“Within the beltway...we are accused of being unfocused, dissipating our energies and taxpayer monies in an array of ineffectual programs and projects. On the other hand, we are accused of being overly focused, operating under constricting paradigms and simplistic assumptions about democratic nationbuilding.

“Outside the beltway, however, in the field and the nations in which we operate, our rep-

utation is different. We are broadly recognized as one of the premier agencies of development in the world.”

Foreign aid is increasing the importance of investing in good governance. “We must fortify weak or failed states by helping to rid them of corruption and by enabling them to take advantage of the inherent strengths of their lands and peoples,” he said.

USAID aid will focus on “nurturing the conditions of a healthy business climate and connecting it to both local and world economies.”

“I am talking about empowering the marginalized by giving them security over the property to which they now have rights only by sufferance of the powerful,” Natsios said.

And aid programs “have come to embrace more fully the importance of civil society”

including NGOs, churches, universities, think tanks, foundations, corporate programs, private individuals, and government actors, at national and international levels, he said.

Barbara Turner, acting assistant administrator for Program and Policy Coordination, where the White Paper was produced, told the ACFVA meeting that the Agency’s portfolio in recent years has widened to include global issues, such as trade, preventing new diseases from entering the country, and other issues.

And while the United States won’t abandon countries like Afghanistan or Iraq that have strategic importance, USAID also needs to be selective. To be successful, our assistance must serve U.S. interests as well as those of the states we assist, Turner said. ★

## White Paper Proposes 5 Goals

The Agency has released a draft White Paper to clarify USAID’s role both to its staff and to the wider U.S. government community. The paper argues that different goals call for different criteria, for distributing resources as well as judging success. Programs are more likely to succeed if goals, resources, and expectations are aligned with each other.

The paper proposes that the Agency reward good performance when distributing development funds and continue to rely on need as the primary criteria for its humanitarian assistance.

In addition, operational guidelines should recognize on-the-ground realities. For instance, Agency assistance strategies for unstable countries—so-called fragile states—should cover shorter time periods and not attempt to project what is possible five years from now.

The paper outlines five basic goals:

■ *Promoting transformational development* to make enough economic, social, and political progress to enable a country to “graduate” from developmental foreign aid. Relatively stable, low-income countries with capable, reform-oriented governments would be the preferred recipients of USAID’s “transformational development” aid.

■ *Strengthening fragile states* to promote stability, basic governance, and recovery so that a country can graduate to development assistance. Food security, human rights, and basic order would be priorities. The targets would “failing, failed, and recovering” states,

where foreign aid can make a significant, positive difference.

■ *Providing humanitarian relief* to save lives and reduce suffering during man-made or natural disasters, even in countries with governments that are not strong partners. Food and humanitarian assistance are already funded under a separate account and operate under other selection and performance criteria.

■ *Supporting strategic states* to achieve U.S. foreign policy goals identified by the administration or Congress.

■ *Addressing transnational issues* to address issues such as infectious diseases, global climate change, trafficking in persons, and other special concerns. Basic parameters for most strategic and transnational programs would be set in Washington, D.C., while development and aid to fragile states would be more field-driven.

The paper aims to help the Agency make operational sense out of the many goals that have been added to its portfolio in recent years, said Barbara Turner, acting assistant administrator for Policy and Program Coordination (PPC).

“We can’t be everywhere at the level we might like,” said Turner. “Being selective means strengthening analytic capacity and, ideally, more discretion in how resources can be spent.”

PPC currently is discussing the new framework and its implications with Agency employees and the wider development community. ★

### PVOs DEBATE WHITE PAPER

Representatives of private voluntary organizations largely approved of the five proposed goals for the agency set forth in the White Paper—promoting transformational development, strengthening fragile states, providing humanitarian relief, supporting strategic states, and addressing global and transnational issues and other special concerns.

They voiced their views at a discussion group chaired by board member Ted Weihe at the February 25 ACFVA meeting.

While most of those commenting said the goals were well defined, several said they preferred the

old term “sustainable” development to the new term “transformational” development. A few felt it sounded as if development would be imposed on other societies.

PPC director of policy planning, Tish Butler, said the intention was the opposite—that local leadership and ownership is “absolutely essential” to reach the necessary results.

Some discussion was also devoted to a draft “fragile states” strategy that the Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination also presented at the conference. ★

## MCC Plans to Manage \$3.5 Billion

The Millennium Challenge Account (MCA)—the new U.S. aid program for poor countries with sound policies—is working with USAID and other agencies on plans to manage \$3.5 billion in the coming year and a half, senior U.S. officials said.

“We’ve been working very closely with USAID in setting this whole thing up—they have field experience and a wealth of experience in almost all of these countries,” said Clay Lowery, a senior official with the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), at a public meeting March 10 for development experts, NGO officials, and foreign diplomats at the Treasury Department.

Under Secretary of State Alan Larson, interim chief executive officer of the MCC, told the meeting “we are off to a quick start” and listed recent steps to launch the new aid program.

President Bush asked Congress to build funding for the MCA up to \$5 billion a year by 2006. Congress initially appropriated \$1 billion for the MCA in 2004, but because the appropriation just came through, the MCC—for planning purposes—is combining it together with the President’s \$2.5 billion request for FY05, Larson said.

Paul Applegarth, a former World Bank official and businessman, has been nominated permanent CEO and awaits Senate confirmation.

A list of 63 eligible countries has been submitted to Congress, and the MCC’s board will select finalists from those countries in May. The board is chaired by the Secretary of State and includes the

Secretary of the Treasury, the U.S. Trade Representative, and USAID’s Administrator.

Countries hoping to get the MCA aid agreements are already “looking to get help from USAID to address weakness” in areas such as financial management systems required to monitor the aid and measure effectiveness, Larson said.

Among the criteria the MCC will be looking at before awarding aid agreements will be a set of 16 indicators that judge how a country is doing in terms of ruling justly, investing in its people through health and education, and encouraging economic freedom. Additional information will be considered, too, such as how each country treats its handicapped, manages its natural resources, and protects women’s rights, he added.

The goal is to increase economic growth and lift people out of poverty.

The MCA also aims to change the way foreign aid is delivered. Each country will have to propose how it expects to use the MCA grants which could be \$100 million to \$200 million or more—far greater than most existing current aid programs.

“Implementation will be at the local level, and we haven’t decided if we will have an MCA team in each country,” said Lowery. “We will clearly be working with USAID [in some countries] but don’t want to overburden them.”

MCC staffing should reach about 50 this year and possibly 150 in the next year—a small group to manage \$3.5 billion in aid. ★

## Notes from Natsios

▲ FROM PAGE 3

they have the greatest impact. Finally, in fragile states where transformational development is not possible, donors must develop new, more agile responses to fluid circumstances.

In response to the critique that foreign aid lacks coherence and effectiveness, the White Paper makes the straightforward argument that USAID needs to clarify its core goals, more clearly align resources to meet these goals, and manage them strate-

gically against White Paper goals. While clear in principle, implementing the kinds of programmatic changes that the paper suggests will require intensive collaboration within USAID.

I underscore that this is indeed a discussion paper. I urge all bureaus and missions to engage in shaping the role of foreign assistance and determining how we do business in the 21st century. ★

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



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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 email to [frontlines@usaid.gov](mailto:frontlines@usaid.gov); by fax to 202-216-3035, and by mail to Editor, *FrontLines*, USAID, Ronald Reagan Building, Suite 6.10, Washington, D.C. 20523-6100; tel. 202-712-4330.

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## Carter Says AFSA Works Hard to Win Benefits and Training for Staff

As USAID vice president to the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA), Bill Carter is an advocate for the Agency’s foreign service officers (FSOs), 70 percent of whom live and work overseas. Carter sees AFSA as their U.S.-based representative, defending members’ interests and keeping them informed.

In addition to his weekly meetings with management to promote AFSA’s agenda—including pay comparability across agencies—Carter fields questions from individual members.

“I service individual clients’ needs,” he said. “A big part of what I do every day is dealing with specific problems related to annual evaluation forms, evacuation regulations, etc. It’s amazing how little things come up all the time.”

For instance, an FSO may find that an executive officer in one post interprets rules differently from the officer at a previous post. “They’re often extremely simple matters,” Carter said, adding that AFSA has in-house expertise on topics such as personnel evaluations, household benefits, and travel regulations.

One frequent question concerns business-class travel, which USAID leaves to the discretion of individual bureaus and missions.

People often complain about a lack of transparency or fairness, Carter said. He advocates that everyone be treated the same way within a particular unit. Above all, “leaders in missions should not take business class themselves and then not let their staff take it.”

Carter said he hopes that being proactive and raising the issue will avoid conflicts and grievances down the road.

Carter says AFSA’s top priorities are comparable pay and benefits for USAID and Department of State FSOs and training. While USAID’s training budget has



Bill Carter, USAID vice president of AFSA.

increased to \$10 million, there was “no training for years,” he said.

“The more experienced folks are overworked and not, perhaps, as good at mentoring as they could be,” said Carter. He added that the coaching program for NEPs (new entry professionals) is a good thing, although there should be more of it.

The biggest issue facing the Agency is workforce planning and the transition to a new generation, he said.

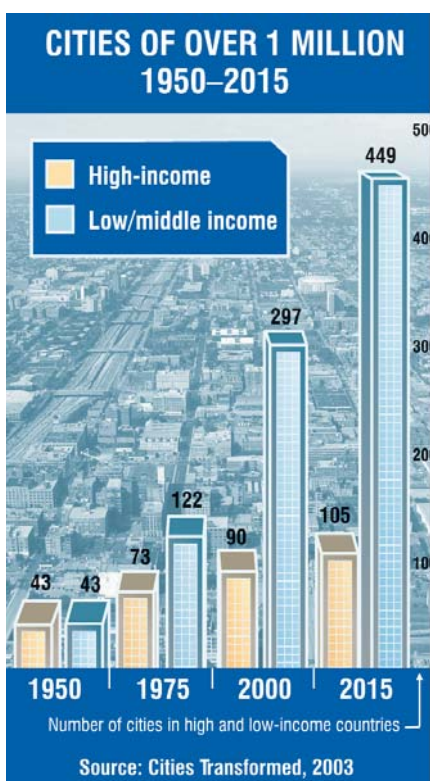
Another of Carter’s jobs is to fight for attention to USAID issues within the organization, since three-quarters of the organization’s 12,000 members are from the Department of State. Of USAID’s 1,058 FSOs, about 75 percent belong to AFSA.

Carter was elected for a two-year term to represent USAID within AFSA in July 2003. He served 27 years in the foreign service, including posts in Ghana, the Philippines, Indonesia, Romania, Kenya, and Cambodia. Most recently, he served two years in the Agency’s Office of Human Resources. ★

[www.afsa.com](http://www.afsa.com)

## Correction

There was an error in the February infographic. The correct version is below.



## Borlaug Calls for New Roads to Deliver Fertilizer

▲ FROM PAGE 1

key to feeding the growing world population is to improve and then farm acidic soils in Brazil, Zambia, and other countries.

“I’m pleading for infrastructure for food production, but it goes far beyond,” Borlaug told *FrontLines* in an exclusive interview March 29.

“We could double and triple the production of corn overseas but can’t get it into production because of the lack of infrastructure to deliver fertilizer. You can have a good crop in one area and, 200 miles away, people are starving.

“Even more basic, if roads were built, it

brings schools, doctors, services.” Roads also cut across cultural, linguistic, and ethnic borders—breaking down fears between tribes, he said. Food for work programs should be used to get people to build roads, even with picks and shovels, he said.

Borlaug, a native of Iowa, has lived and conducted research on wheat and corn for the past 60 years at a research station in Mexico funded by USAID and the Rockefeller Foundation. He was in Washington for a State Department ceremony announcing the 2004 World Food Prize winners: rice breeders Yuan Longping of China and Monty Jones of Sierra Leone.

Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, standing alongside Administrator Natsios at the ceremony, led the singing of “Happy Birthday” in honor of Borlaug’s 90th.

“We honor Dr. Borlaug the father of the Green Revolution,” said Powell, as champagne and birthday cake was served.

“Thanks to Dr. Borlaug’s pioneering work in the 1960s to develop varieties of high-yielding wheat, countless millions of men, women and children, who will never know his name, will never go to bed hungry.”

Still spry physically and clear mentally,

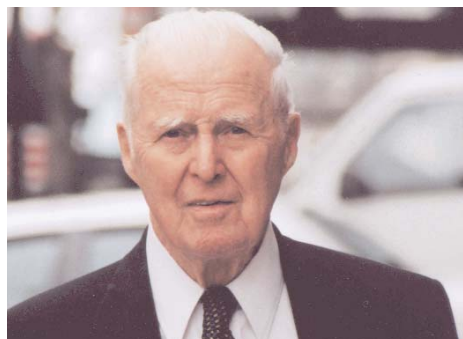
Borlaug said the next advance in food production will come by improving acidic soils in the bulge of Brazil, Zambia, and elsewhere. Lime and fertilizer improves these soils enough so that soybeans and corn plants bred with resistance to acidity can be grown.

Borlaug is also highly critical of what he called “environmental extremists” who oppose the use of biotech foods altered genetically to resist drought or pesticides. Ironically, the day of the interview, Angola joined Zambia and other African countries with food shortages that refuse to accept U.S.-donated biotech corn.

The Nobel winner has long fought political battles to win acceptance for new food technologies. He used the press to pressure India into trying his high-yield wheat and building fertilizer factories needed for the Green Revolution in the 1960s. ★

### HELP WANTED

*FrontLines* would like stories from people who worked for Food for Peace between the 1950s and 1990s for a 50th anniversary feature on the U.S. Food for Peace program. Please send your contact information or story to [FrontLines@usaid.gov](mailto:FrontLines@usaid.gov)



Dr. Norman Borlaug, on his 90th birthday



**Dominican Republic Agrees to Free Trade**

**SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic**—The United States and the Dominican Republic agreed to remove almost all trade restrictions between their countries over the next decade, a move that essentially adds the Dominican Republic to the proposed Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA).

CAFTA aims to reduce commercial barriers between the United States and Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. The U.S.-Dominican Republic agreement allows the gradual boost of the Dominican Republic's sugar exports to the United States, but limits the increase and maintains stiff tariffs for exceeding the caps.

**U.S. Spends Too Much on Aid, Say 64%**

**WASHINGTON**—A new poll found that the number of Americans who think the United States spends too much money on foreign aid increased from 54 percent in 2002 to 64 percent in 2004. The Gallup Organization interviewed 1,002 adults by phone February 9–12.

Most adults said they believed that the federal government was spending the right amount of money for national defense and military purposes. Nine percent said the United States spends too little on aid, and a quarter said they thought the country was spending just the right amount.

**Ukrainian Radio Head Dies**

**KIEV, Ukraine**—Yuriy Chechyk, head of a Ukrainian radio station who was considering broadcasting the programs of the U.S.-funded Radio Liberty, died in a car crash March 3, the day another station transmitting the programs was pulled off the air. The loss of Radio Liberty's second outlet in a month caused suspicions of foul play and complaints that Ukrainian authorities are cracking down on media freedom.

**Iraq Reconstruction Contracts Awarded**

**BAGHDAD**—U.S. and British firms won two contracts worth \$1.1 billion to help rebuild Iraq, the U.S. Program Management Office (PMO) said in a statement released March 12. Another eight major deals are expected to be announced for countries that supported the war in Iraq.

The U.S.-U.K. joint venture Fluor/AMEC won a \$500 million contract to work on Iraq's electricity sector. Another public works contract, with a ceiling of \$600 million to repair Iraq's water infrastructure, was given to Washington International/Black and Veatch Joint Venture. The two contracts were the biggest to date from a \$5 billion package earmarked for Iraq construction projects.

The Pentagon also awarded seven contracts worth more than \$120 million to U.S. and British companies to manage reconstruction projects in six sectors: electricity, public

works, security and justice, transportation and communication, health and education, and oil. A series of smaller contracts to build housing developments were won by Iraqi, Polish, and United Arab Emirates firms.

Two separate contracts worth \$1 billion have already been awarded to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to rebuild Iraq's oil sector.

**Schools Burn in Pakistan**

**KARACHI, Pakistan**—Arsonists struck nine schools in the remote hills of northern Pakistan in early March, sparking official concern that the area might be targeted by the Taliban or other Islamist groups, who are critical of organizations that get foreign aid. Local observers said the attacks point to the need to establish better relationships between foreign aid groups and community members in the deeply religious and socially conservative northern region.

**Small-Business Contracting Addressed**

**WASHINGTON**—Administrator Natsios wants to meet USAID's Small Business Procurement Preference goals by ensuring that small businesses are actively involved in all segments of program activities. He also asked for help capturing data that validate USAID's commitment to use small business as prime contractors and subcontractors, because accurate information is not available.

**Aid May Increase to Restore Marshlands**

**WASHINGTON**—A congressional panel has discussed the possibility of increasing U.S. aid to revive the Iraqi marshlands, which were drained and severely damaged ecologically by Saddam Hussein in the 1990s as part of a plan to drive out the Marsh Arabs.

Acting Assistant Administrator Gordon West told the House International Relations Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia in February that heavy snows and dam demolition helped the marshes to begin to revive, but much more work remains.

USAID and the Department of State have begun a \$4 million program to draft a restoration plan, but total estimates range upward of \$250 million. New money would pay for an engineering survey of the damage to the marshes, tearing down dams to increase river flow, restoring homes, and improving wildlife habitat.



The Marshlands, drained by Saddam's regime.

## Sudan Accused

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could see villages burning.

"Is this ethnic cleansing, as some NGOs claim? It sure looks like it."

Government-backed ethnic Arab tribesmen of the Janjaweit Militia, mounted on camels and horses, attacked ethnic African Sudanese villages in Darfur.

Some 3 million people—half the inhabitants of North, West, and South Darfur provinces—have been affected by the conflict, which has been intensifying for about a year. About 800,000 are displaced internally, and 100,000 have fled across the western border into Chad.

The U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is reporting systematic mass rape of women and girls, the burning of hundreds of African villages to the ground, and the execution of boys and men by the Janjaweit.

"War is still raging," said Winter February 26, a day before he flew to Sudan to try and cope with the crisis.

The Khartoum government, dominated by Arabs, has not taken steps to halt the fighting, Winter said.

Working with the State department, the European Union, the Chadian government, and the UN leadership, Winter has been trying to mediate between both government and Darfur opposition leaders to arrange a ceasefire to speed the delivery of food, water, and other aid.

He is also trying to bring in international monitors to report on human rights abuses, and to force the Sudanese government to stop the atrocities of the Janjaweit militias.

The U.S. government has pledged \$9.3 million in aid to the refugees in Chad. USAID has given more than \$1 million in aid to the Darfur region and expects to add another \$800,000 in March. The Agency's Food for Peace bureau has given an estimated 50,000 tons of food worth \$38 million to Darfur and 7,700 tons of food to Sudanese refugees in Chad. ★

## Haiti Aid Resumes

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"At one point, we were warned by the embassy security office that 'chimeres' (goons) were headed for our office and we had to scramble to get to safety," Adams recalled.

The foreign service nationals on staff also were unable to report for work during the crisis as groups of pro-Aristide militants created havoc in the streets and looters roamed at will.

Mission and Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance staff were flying in small planes around the Caribbean island nation of 8 million to assess humanitarian

and other needs, Adams said. They were distributing medical aid and cash to NGOs to help the most vulnerable in orphanages, homes for elderly, and homes for disabled.

Catholic Relief Services reported some 600 tons of food aid was looted from the port, but Adams said much more remained to handle the needs of Haitians.

Before the crisis began about a month and a half ago, about 350,000 Haitians were receiving daily food supplies from USAID and another 300,000 got benefits such as school lunches and medical care through NGOs that USAID funds. ★

## Protect and Reform Foreign Aid, Experts Tell Congress

At a February 26 House Committee on International Relations hearing addressed by senior aid experts, Chairman Henry Hyde (R-Illinois) called for a national foreign assistance strategy.

Committee member Donald Payne (D-New Jersey) called for more funding of U.S. development priorities and linked foreign assistance to political stabilization of fragile states, including Haiti.

Expert witnesses consistently called for a coherent national foreign assistance policy.

Several witnesses remarked on the need to reorient USAID to be better managed and freer of earmarked funds.

Steve Radelet of the Center for Global Development, recommended the creation of a Cabinet-level department for foreign assistance. He called for a revamping of the "cumbersome and outdated" foreign assistance program to align it with U.S. foreign policy goals.

He and others also said that the administration should make a stronger commitment to the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

While they welcomed presidential initiatives on HIV/AIDS and the Millennium Challenge Account, the expert witnesses argued for stronger cohesion and clarity of roles in foreign assistance.

They stressed that new initiatives

should not come at the cost of core development assistance.

Helle Dale of the Heritage Foundation emphasized the importance of foreign aid being linked to good governance.

Lael Brainard of the Brookings Institution pointed to the importance of monitoring and evaluation to measure the effectiveness of foreign assistance.

Mary McClymont, chief executive officer of InterAction, highlighted the option of using NGOs and civil society to distribute assistance in countries where good governance is an issue. She stressed that USAID has less authority than it had in the past, and this has led to increased fragmentation and loss of coherence in foreign assistance strategy.

McClymont also recommended a full-scale independent review of foreign assistance to create a coherent structure. In the interim, she said, USAID's authority should be strengthened. She pointed out that core development assistance funding should not be sacrificed to fund MCA.

Expert witnesses agreed it was a good idea to relieve the debt burden of poor countries to encourage democracy and economic growth.

All noted that a new foreign assistance strategy should include links to national security. Such a strategy, including humanitarian outreach, is essential for reestablishing U.S. credibility abroad, they said. ★



## Women's Struggles Honored in Photo Exhibit

In one image, four women are baking. In another, a woman rushes through the door of her home, her light blue flowing robe waving behind her.

These are scenes from the life of Afghan women in the post-Taliban era as explored in a USAID photo exhibit, *Out of the Shadows*, inaugurated to celebrate International Women's Day in early March.

"This exhibit opens at a time when a new page has opened for women in Afghanistan," said Yunus Qanuni, Minister of Education of Afghanistan, who attended the opening ceremony March 11. "The ladies of Afghanistan are not the same women they were three years ago."

Under the Taliban, women were barred from education, had to wear robes covering them from head-to-toe, and had no representation in government. Female literacy in Afghanistan was 21 percent in 1999. In the

last two years, since the fall of the Taliban, new rights and opportunities have become available to women, and girls are attending school in great numbers.

"We applaud the lifting of the veil," said Elisabeth Kvitashvili, a former senior project development officer for Afghanistan, who also spoke at the exhibit's opening ceremony. "But there is still much to be done on behalf of Afghan women."

A short documentary film made by some of Afghanistan's first female journalists was played on a television as part of the exhibit. It showed that even under the new government, women have a long way to go before they are treated as equals.

Women interviewed on film inside their homes told of being locked up by their husbands, forbidden to leave the home without permission, and forbidden to attend school. One woman said she was forced into mar-

riage after her husband said he would have her raped and killed and her family as well if she refused his demands.

The exhibit is on display at the USAID Information Center in Washington, D.C.

Other USAID-sponsored International Women's Day events included the following:

- USAID/Iraq opened the first of nine women's centers in Baghdad that will help Iraqi women train for jobs and get access to legal, medical, and financial help. The centers will be paid for with a \$1.4 million grant from USAID and the Coalition Provisional Authority.
- USAID/Mali was publicly recognized by the Ministry of Women's Promotion for its work on women and economic growth.
- USAID/Nepal organized a three-day film festival that raised issues such as trafficking, child marriage, and other forms of violence against women.
- USAID/Morocco participated in a summit for rural women leaders, including 50 women who benefited from USAID-sponsored activities. Participants discussed the new family code. ★



M. Lueders, USAID

USAID is funding programs that educate women about vaccinations and prevention of diseases such as diarrhea, polio, cholera, and tuberculosis. Such diseases claim the lives of millions of children and make Afghanistan's child mortality rate one of the highest in the world.



IOM-ATI Staff

This bakery in west Kabul employs 12 women. They earn a reliable income weighting dough and kneading, rolling, and shaping it into the long oval flatbreads that Afghans prefer.



"Today I went to three functions and took photos. I cannot predict the future, but I am optimistic." These are the words of Ayoubi, a photojournalist and one of hundreds of Afghan women working in media.

## Fern Holland, Women's Rights Advocate, Slain



Fern Holland, a lawyer working for women's rights and the CPA, was killed in Iraq March 9.

Fern Holland, a young American lawyer who covered her hair with a head scarf as she worked on USAID and other projects in Iraq, lost her life March 9 when gunmen riddled her car as she left a women's center she had helped create in Karbala.

Holland, who was a USAID contractor last fall in Iraq, died along with her Iraqi assistant and translator Salwa Ali Oumashi, 31, and a former U.S. marine and press officer Robert Zangas, 44. All were working for the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and based in Al Hillah, a south central city about an hour's drive southwest of Baghdad, when they were killed.

"Fern was an angel—she worked very hard for women," said Dr. Rajaa H. Khuzai, a member of the Iraqi Governing Council. "She died while working for and helping Iraqi women. She knew how much they suffered."

Beginning in July 2003, Holland worked for USAID in Al Hillah on human rights and women's issues as part of the Abuse Prevention Unit. She interviewed Shiite survivors of massacres during the 1991 uprising after the first Gulf War. Three of the testimonies she collected were published last month in the Agency's "Mass Graves" report.

After Holland and Oumashi left USAID and began work for the CPA, Holland helped draft the section of the Iraqi constitution dealing with women's rights. They set up

several women's centers in Hillah, Karbala, and other Shiite cities that helped women obtain job training, computer skills, legal services, literacy, basic healthcare, and help combating violence.

The three aid workers—the first civilian CPA staff to die in Iraq—had just left one of the women's centers in Karbala when their car was stopped at a highway checkpoint by men dressed as policemen who opened fire, killed the three occupants and apparently stole the vehicle. Polish forces in the area stopped the car and arrested the men.

FBI officials were assigned to investigate. "Fern was incredibly driven and had very strong convictions and vision," said Donna Kerner of OTI, who was Holland's roommate in Al Hillah for three months.

"She said 'I'm here to bring democracy to Iraq and to free women from persecution and discrimination,'" Kerner said.

Holland accompanied a delegation of prominent Iraqi women to the United States last fall that met with President Bush at the White House and Administrator Natsios at USAID headquarters.

Oumashi was a well-educated Iraqi woman who had lived in exile for many years but returned to Iraq to work on human rights protection after the ouster of Saddam Hussein's regime.

"If I die, know that I'm doing precisely what I want to be doing," Holland wrote in an email to a friend in Tulsa on Jan. 21, the Associated Press reported.

"She believed in freedom," her sister Vi Holland said. "She believed that every man and woman born should enjoy the right of freedom."

Holland gave up well-paying work as a lawyer to work for the Peace Corps and for the American Refugee Committee (ARC) in Africa, where she helped create policies and laws to protect refugees, especially women and children.

ARC has renamed in her honor the refugee legal clinic she founded in Guinea. Holland was posthumously awarded the Defense Medal of Freedom by the Assistant Secretary of the Army on March 8. ★

[www.fern holland.com](http://www.fern holland.com)