

# FRONT LINES



www.usaid.gov

U.S. Agency for International Development Employee News

OCTOBER 2004

**“When you look back over the 40 years, OFDA [the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance] was intended to be swift, creative, flexible, and solution-oriented; to be the United States at its best.”**



DR. RICHARD OLSON,  
Florida International University,  
Author of OFDA history and former OFDA employee

▼ SEE OFDA'S 40TH ON PAGES 1-2

## Spotlight on Afghanistan

As the October 9 presidential election in Afghanistan approached, USAID was busy helping more than 10.5 million Afghans register, encouraging women to participate in the process, and helping election officials prepare for elections. See pages 8-9 for a special feature on Afghanistan.

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

U.S. Agency for International Development  
Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs  
Washington, D.C. 20523-6100  
Penalty for Private Use \$300  
Official Business  
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

## Sudan Deaths Climb

**DARFUR, Sudan**—The crisis in Western Sudan has been called genocide by Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, and it continued unabated in this African country, leaving 2 million people affected and a death rate of 6,000-10,000 per month, U.N. officials said.

USAID remained deeply involved in providing relief to the displaced. Fourteen staff members were posted to Khartoum, the capital, and the three Darfur provinces. Administrator Andrew Natsios made his latest visit to the region September 15-18.

A breakdown in talks between the Sudan government and rebels in mid-September and ongoing clashes between the two sides raised fears that aid could be further obstructed and violence could spread among civilians.

The ethnic Arab Jangaweit militia, armed and backed by the Sudan government, continued to be blamed for rapes, murders, the wanton destruction of many villages, and displacement of non-Arab residents of Darfur.

Police deployed by the government into displacement camps have not eased concerns for the safety of the displaced. The police have strong ties to the

Jangaweit, according to observers.

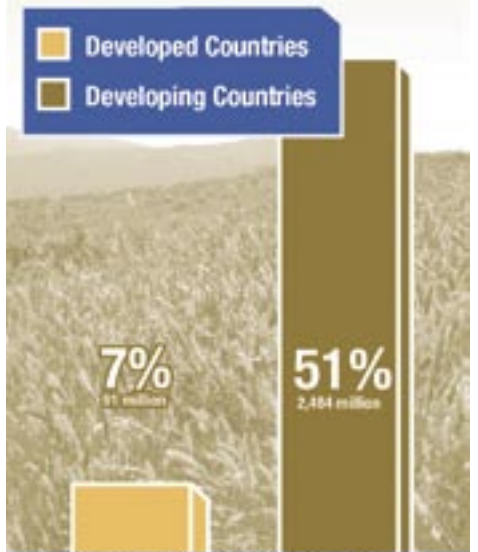
“The reports streaming in from Sudanese refugees in Chad and from the Sudanese in Darfur clearly show that the events of the past year have shattered their lives. Trust in the government is completely eroded and, without dramatic improvement in security, Sudanese will not be able to return home,” said Roger Winter, Assistant Administrator of Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance.

Swiss relief officials, the first to use a transportation corridor cleared by Libya, sent 400 tons of food overland from Libya. They crossed 2,500 miles of the Sahara Desert in 25 days to reach some of the 200,000 refugees in Chad. However, the Chad-Sudan border remains closed to passage of food and other commodities, though the Chadian government has proved helpful in the crisis.

In addition, seasonal rains have made roads impassible in places, cutting off some of the refugee camps in Chad and displaced persons' camps in Sudan.

USAID airlifted 24 all-terrain trucks into Khartoum in September, and they have been put to work hauling food from Port Sudan to Darfur. ★

## AGRICULTURAL POPULATION AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL



Note: Developed countries include the transition economies of the former Soviet Union.  
Source: U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, 2001.

▼ SEE AGRICULTURE ON PAGE 5

## OFDA's 40th: Storms, Crises, Swift Response

The Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) celebrated its 40th anniversary by responding to massive damage from Hurricane Ivan, which tore through the islands of Grenada and Jamaica in early September.

OFDA also responded to the seizure of hostages in a school in Russia, which left more than 350 children and adults dead and more than 700 wounded.

And the office dispatched funds and emergency supplies to Haiti after Tropical Storm Jeanne's heavy rains caused mudslides and severe flooding, killing more than 1,500 people.

▼ SEE STORMS, RESPONSE ON PAGE 2

## Jobs Key in Iraq

**BAGHDAD**—At least 50,000 Iraqis per month are finding work—whether temporary or permanent—through USAID-supported programs.

“We are the engine, in terms of creating

▼ SEE IRAQ ON PAGE 14

## AT-RISK YOUTH PROGRAMS IN BRAZIL



Mila Petrillo

A contemporary dance performance by the Dance and Social Integration School for Children and Adolescents (EDISCA), held June 8 in Brasilia to commemorate the 10th anniversary of USAID/Brazil's program assisting at-risk youth. EDISCA offers children from Fortaleza's poorest neighborhoods the chance to participate in arts, health, education, and nutrition activities.

▼ SEE ARTICLE ON PAGE 10

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**NEW AGRICULTURE STRATEGY**



PAGE 5

**GRANTS FOR IRAQ ELECTIONS**

PAGE 7

Ukraine Public Accountants Get Certified . . . 3  
Polio Immunization Campaign in Africa . . . 7  
Women Plumbers Trained in Jordan . . . . . 11  
Where in the World . . . . . 12-13  
Recruitment at USAID . . . . . 16



**OFDA IN ACTION**

PAGE 2

# OFDA Speeds Relief to Disaster Victims

From hurricanes and floods to wars to famine, USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) races across the globe to offer help. Even in the absence of diplomatic ties, OFDA rushed to Bam, Iran, to serve the displaced after its December 2003 earthquake.

Some 6,000 blankets and 600 tents were airlifted to survivors of Algeria's May 2003 earthquake, and 10,000 water containers were sent to Kenya after extensive floods. These are a few examples of OFDA's work.

In fiscal year 2003, the office, which is a part of the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance and recently celebrated its 40th anniversary, spent \$290 million on disaster response projects.

In recent years, much of OFDA's work has focused on "complex emergencies"—wars and conflicts. This has often involved working with displaced people and dealing with the effects of conflict on agriculture, the backbone of many developing countries' economies. Examples of such work include Iraq, Sudan, and Ethiopia.

In case of an international emergency—whether manmade or a natural disaster—OFDA can immediately provide up to \$50,000 to a U.S. Embassy or mission to purchase relief supplies locally. The money can also be contributed to a relief organization in the country or other groups

carrying out relief projects.

OFDA's Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs) are designed for rapid deployment to anywhere in the world requiring humanitarian assistance. Though a typical DART team is primarily made up of OFDA staff, representatives from Food for Peace, the Office of Transition Initiatives, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or the State Department are also often assigned.

Disasters lead to the displacement of thousands of people, who typically move away from their homes to a shelter area. Providing a place to sleep and feeding the victims of disaster are the first concerns.

OFDA works with NGOs and international relief agencies. For instance, after Tropical Storm Jeanne caused severe floods and mudslides in Haiti in late September, USAID provided more than \$2.7 million, including contributions to CARE, the Pan American Health Organization, the U.N. World Food Program, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Crescent Societies.

Beyond immediate disaster response, OFDA supports programs that provide seeds and tools to farmers, drill wells, and repair water systems. It also works on drought early warning systems. ★



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

A satellite sees Hurricane Ivan September 9 nearing Jamaica, two days after it devastated Grenada. The destructive Category 5 hurricane then had sustained winds of 160 miles per hour.

## OFDA Emergencies, January–September 2004

Type of Disaster	Country
Accident	North Korea
Complex Emergencies	Uganda, Burundi, Liberia, Sudan, Congo (DRC), Zimbabwe, Iraq, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Chad
Cholera	Togo
Cyclones	Vanuatu, Madagascar
Drought	Laos, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan
Earthquakes	Indonesia, Morocco, Pakistan
Explosion	Indonesia
Fires	Guinea, Paraguay
Floods	Brazil, Namibia, Djibouti, Haiti, Nicaragua, Bangladesh, Georgia, Nepal, India, Tajikistan, Romania
Hostage-Taking	Russia
Hurricanes	Cuba, Bahamas, Grenada, Jamaica
Locusts and Infestations	Mali, Morocco, Mauritania
Mudslides	Kyrgyzstan
Storms	Eritrea
Typhoon	Taiwan

## OFDA Invests in Liberia

**MONROVIA, Liberia**—Since 2003, OFDA has invested more than \$23.5 million for the humanitarian effort at the end of this country's civil wars, which destroyed much of Liberia's infrastructure, paralyzed its economy, and left hundreds of thousands homeless and without adequate food, medicine, education, and other services.

The office has supported humanitarian relief programs through NGOs and international agencies such as UNICEF.

In early July, a soccer match was held in Samuel K. Doe Stadium after the departure of the last of the 14,000 displaced Liberians who took shelter there at the peak of the crisis. Today, 16 percent of Liberians still rely on food aid.

In August 2003, a DART was deployed to Liberia after President Charles Taylor fled the country.

The greatest challenge, according to Fred "Sky" Wiseman, a public health consultant who was part of the team, was to assess accurately humanitarian needs and provide assistance for large numbers of displaced people living in extremely crowded conditions.

The DART assessed the water, sanitation, and health needs of the affected population. Then it carried out programs to immunize people against measles and keep cholera and malaria under control.

"The situation in and around Monrovia was very difficult," Wiseman said. "At the beginning of the response, the availability of water and sanitation facilities in the numerous shelters was well below international humanitarian standards. A tremendous effort by a wide range of international part-



Fred Wiseman

After helping assess water, sanitation, and health needs, the DART supplied one latrine per 100 displaced people in Liberia.

ners was needed to...improve conditions."

A DART typically provides immediate emergency relief supplies, such as plastic sheeting, blankets, hygiene kits, water jugs, water storage bladders, and portable emergency water treatment plants.

Yet much remains to be done. Despite the U.N. Mission to Liberia's (UNMIL) deployment of 15,000 peacekeeping troops since last October, five of the nation's counties remain strongholds for rebels, who harass civilians and exploit the rubber and timber trades.

As of July 19, 2004, UNMIL had disarmed 4,838 children—about a quarter of the number estimated to be participating in the conflict, according to Amnesty International. More than 65 percent of the disarmed children have been reunited with their families, according to UNICEF. ★

## Storms, Response

### ▲ FROM PAGE 1

"September was a very busy month for us," said Michael Marx, a disaster response team leader with OFDA. "But immediate response to humanitarian disasters is at the heart of what we do, so we were prepared."

Hurricane Ivan tore through Grenada September 7, damaging or destroying 90 percent of homes and affecting nearly all of the island's 90,000 residents. By a week later, 37 deaths were reported. Some 5,000 people were living in shelters.

Two days later, Ivan ripped into Jamaica, leaving 18 dead. Some 18,000 people were displaced when dozens of communities were flooded and many houses were structurally damaged.

In Grenada, OFDA provided \$100,000 to buy emergency relief supplies and for in-country air transport and aerial assessments of affected areas. OFDA also provided \$150,000 to the Pan American Health Organization for health services and infrastructure rebuilding.

The Agency also has provided Grenada with 3,360 ten-liter and 6,800 five-gallon water containers, a water treatment unit, four 10,000-liter water bladder kits, 774 rolls of plastic sheeting, 4,332 hygiene kits, and 12 chainsaws for debris removal. As of September 20, some \$386,000 worth of sup-

plies had been airlifted to the island.

In Jamaica, OFDA provided \$50,000 for relief activities to be carried out by the Red Cross and the Salvation Army. OFDA also airlifted 2,000 jerry cans, 360 rolls of plastic sheeting, 2,024 hygiene kits, and 8 boats with motors and life vests valued at nearly \$200,000, including transport.

In Haiti, USAID has provided more than \$1.9 million in humanitarian aid, including for plastic sheeting, hygiene kits, cooking sets, blankets, water containers, and other relief supplies.

As hurricanes raged in the Caribbean, terrorists seized a school in North Ossetia, Russia, September 1. After a three-day siege that ended violently, the U.S. Ambassador in Moscow, Alexander Vershbow, issued a disaster declaration.

OFDA provided \$50,000 to the Russian Red Cross for medical equipment and support medical services. On September 6, the U.S. Department of Defense sent two C-130s with emergency supplies from a Department of State stockpile in Germany.

USAID supplemented this contribution through the purchase of five trauma and five burn kits valued at \$80,000 from a stockpile in Italy. In all, USAID has provided \$130,000 in assistance to Russia. ★

## First Person



**“I do it because I’m older now—at that phase where I want to give back”**

EMILIA A. GARONG, JUSTICE MEDIATOR VOLUNTEER AND SUBA COMMUNITY CAPTAIN,  
Suba neighborhood, Cebu, Philippines

USAID/Virginia Foley

**Emilia A. Garong was asked why she donates so much of her time to the Barangay Justice Service System. She hears 200–300 community disputes a month in the Suba neighborhood of Cebu. She turns any disputes she cannot resolve over to a local three-person panel for mediation. Garong is one of 1,800 volunteers participating in the USAID-funded Barangay Justice Service System, which is implemented by the Gerry Roxas Foundation, a local NGO. The volunteers have brought 85–95 percent of local cases to resolution, cutting in half the backlog of cases coming to local courts in just two years.**

## Notes from Natsios

★★★★★★★★



### OFDA ADAPTS TO NEW CHALLENGES, BUT REMAINS TRUE TO ITS MISSION

In September, we observed the 40th anniversary of the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), which I had the privilege of leading from 1989 to 1991.

OFDA is responsible for coordinating the U.S. government response to emergencies overseas—including natural disasters such as hurricanes, floods, droughts, fires, and earthquakes—as well as the outbreak of epidemics and the infestation of pests. It also includes manmade disasters, from civil conflict and industrial accidents to acts of terrorism.

By helping feed devastated populations, providing them with shelter, and ministering to their health needs, OFDA has saved millions of lives. It has worked on reconstruction, allowing families around the world to pick up the pieces and resume their lives. OFDA is the quintessential expression of American humanitarianism in action.

Its work also makes it an invaluable contributor to American foreign policy. The goodwill that is generated toward the United States by our humanitarian work affects opinion around the world. Previous experiences indicate that the memories of America’s helping hand in dark times remain embedded in the public’s consciousness long after an emergency is over.

Ronald Reagan once expressed the spirit of American humanity when he declared that “a hungry child has no politics.” The humanitarianism of this country may affect world politics. But political calculation does not determine our response.

Many have said that OFDA’s mission has changed with its work in Iraq and Afghanistan. This is only partly true. Traditional humanitarian relief will, of course, continue.

Iraq and Afghanistan, however, make clear what has been increasingly true for some time: emergency relief needs to contend with violence and its aftereffects.

This new role often involves maneuvering in a politically charged atmosphere, with conflicting political allegiances and personal partisanship. It means addressing the needs of decommissioned soldiers, preventing abuse of the vulnerable, and even undertaking mine removal.

So it is not so much the mission of OFDA that has changed as the environment in which it is increasingly called to operate. The complex humanitarian emergencies of the recent past have grown even more complex as the war on terror engages us.

Over the past 40 years, OFDA has evolved to meet its challenges. We will now have to draw upon the courage, commitment, and creativity of OFDA to meet future formidable tasks. ★

## Mission of the Month

### UKRAINE

#### The Challenge

Profit and loss, depreciation, and other basic accounting concepts were virtually unknown in Ukraine, Russia, and other former Soviet republics a decade ago. In the Soviet Union, those selling goods for more than they paid were “profiteers” and subject to criminal prosecution. Bookkeepers tracked quantities of goods and materials, not costs or income.

Introducing international accounting practices has been a big part of USAID’s economic development strategy in the region, but it met with stiff resistance.

Many of the 3 million Soviet bookkeepers and accountants signed up for Western accounting, but international certification—such as the U.S. Certified Public Accountant (CPA)—was only available to those fluent in English or other Western languages. In some countries, newly formed professional accounting associations set up local certification but, without international certification, former Soviet accountants got little benefit from learning completely new standards, principles, and ethics.

#### Innovative USAID Response

Since 2001, the Agency has worked informally to develop a Russian-language Certified International Professional Accountant (CIPA). That year, 13 professional accounting associations from across Eurasia joined to form the International Council of Certified Auditors and Accountants (ICCAA), which requires CIPA certification for its members.

To make CIPA a world-class designation, USAID called on leading accounting organizations to help create an internationally recognized education, examination, and certification program based on international financial reporting standards and international standards of audit. Chief of USAID/Ukraine’s Private Enterprise Division, Rick Gurley led the effort. The Ukraine mission, Global Development Alliance and Bureau for Europe and Eurasia added to the more than \$3.5 million contributed by USAID.

On August 17, 2004, Administrator Natsios, Chairman of the International Accounting Standards Committee Foundation Paul Volcker, ICCAA President Sapar Koshkimbaev, and Regional Mission Director Chris Crowley signed an agreement, which allows the ICCAA to use the copyrighted International Financial Reporting Standards and logo on its CIPA certificates and its marketing and training materials.

Separately, the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the Certified International Professional Accountant Examination Network, and the Moscow-based Thunderbird Center for Business Skills Development agreed to help improve the CIPA exams, including their adminis-



Tatiana Serduk, CIPA-EN

*Natalya Vasylenko, Ukraine’s first CIPA, receives her certificate Sept. 13 from Kurt Ramin, of the International Accounting Standards Board.*

tration and scoring. Accountants will take three exams to become certified accounting practitioners, and an additional four exams to become full CIPAs.

#### Results

Like the CPA in the United States, CIPA is an internationally recognized professional certification. And with Agency-sponsored accounting training leading to internationally recognized certifying examinations in Russian, resistance is melting away, said Gurley.

“Employers are sending current employees to take the training and examinations and are beginning to require that new accounting employees have the CIPA designation,” he said.

So far, the International Financial Reporting Standards has been translated into Russian, Ukrainian, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and Uzbek, and adopted as the national standard in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. More than 50,000 CIPA courses have been taught and nearly 40,000 CIPA examinations given. More than 3,000 accountants have earned practitioner status and 34 are fully certified CIPAs.

The National Bank of Ukraine has stipulated that only auditors who have passed internationally recognized examinations—such as CPAs and CIPAs—will be eligible to audit commercial banks.

“We expect that the CIPA will become the standard of accounting professionalism in the Commonwealth of Independent States,” said Kyiv Mission Director Christopher Crowley. “The CIPA training, examination, and certification is leading to more jobs and better wages.”

The alliance of agencies and international accounting associations plans to introduce Spanish, Arabic, and Chinese certification programs, as well. ★

## Natsios Moves to Reinvigorate ACVFA

In a move indicating increased importance and commitment, Administrator Natsios has appointed a new executive director to the Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACVFA), placed the position in his immediate office, and made five new appointments to its board.

Established in 1947 in the aftermath of World War II, ACVFA serves as a link between the U.S. government and private voluntary organizations (PVOs) active in humanitarian assistance and development work overseas. ACVFA comprises citizens with extensive knowledge of international development, and helps provide the underpinning for cooperation between the public and private sectors in U.S. foreign assistance programs.

"This advisory committee serves as a forum for discussing and making recommendations to me on policy issues pertaining to foreign assistance matters in which the U.S. government and PVOs interact," said Natsios. "Because I take seriously this undertaking and their advice, I felt it was best that the executive director be in my office, so that I could more readily call upon the committee at any time, and not just await their recommendations after each of their three meetings yearly."

In addition to moving the executive

director position into his office, Natsios appointed Jocelyn Rowe as ACVFA's new executive director.

Having joined USAID at the beginning of June, she is focused on the committee's next meeting in October. The agenda includes a discussion about the crisis in Darfur, the Global Development Alliance, and the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

Prior to joining USAID, Rowe was with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, where she was a special assistant to the deputy assistant secretary for children and families.

With the recent move of her position to the Administrator's office, Rowe is also focused on strengthening the relationship between ACVFA and the Administrator.

When ACVFA convenes for its third meeting this year October 27, it will include five new members. They represent a variety of professional backgrounds, including the business sector, PVOs, public policy think-tanks, and NGOs.

The new members are Iqbal Noor Ali, chief executive officer (CEO) of the Aga Khan Foundation; Larry Diamond, a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and with the National Endowment for Democracy; Benjamin Homan, president of Food for the Hungry; Michael Nyenhuis, president

and CEO of MAP International; and John Sullivan, executive director of the Center for International Private Enterprise.

Each new member brings a different perspective and set of issues Administrator Natsios wants to see discussed at meetings.

"The question of alleviating poverty as a means of reducing instability in the world" is the issue that Iqbal Noor Ali of the Aga Khan Foundation said he wants to see the board discuss.

"Given the youth unemployment rates and the strategies to help people increase their incomes and get employment, this subject is not only crucial to their future, but also to ours in the United States," he said. "That's one message I want to relay to the Agency."

The foundation works to alleviate poverty and promote sustainable development in Africa and Asia.

For Benjamin Homan of Food for the Hungry, a main point to drive home during ACVFA meetings is the importance of education.

"The resources of the mind are extraordinary, but some folks have not reached that potential yet," he said. "Part of our challenge is creating change that will help outlast us, and education, I think, is the key."

Food for the Hungry works on education,

healthcare, and food security.

"I see part of my role as a member of ACVFA as one of those folks who, like everyone else, is paying taxes and wants to see great results, and who wants the United States to remain fully engaged with other cultures," Homan said. "We can't view our own nation as an island."

Most of the new board members have worked—individually or through their organizations—with the Agency for decades. Larry Diamond, for instance, helped draft *Foreign Aid and the National Interest*, a January 2003 report that proposes that U.S. foreign aid should focus on countries with good governance.

"I bring my long-time advocacy for the principles that are expressed in the Millennium Challenge Corporation: rewarding good performance and quality of governance are key factors in fostering development and shaping decisions about development assistance allocations," Diamond said.

The committee currently has up to 18 members. The charter calls for up to 24. Members are appointed by the USAID Administrator for three-year terms as representatives from their organizations. They serve without compensation. ★

## 5 Missions Implement Phoenix

Five missions—Egypt, Ghana, Peru, Columbia, and Nigeria—went live with Phoenix, the new financial management system, August 10.

The transition was smooth, said Lisa Fiely, USAID's chief financial officer, because of the efforts of the missions' financial management staff, who had to "learn a new system while still meeting daily job responsibilities, and working long hours that at times included weekends."

Phoenix has been supporting accounting transactions at USAID's headquarters since 2000. Now that the first five missions are using the system successfully, the Agency plans to roll out Phoenix to approximately

50 missions next year.

Phoenix, unlike the current overseas Mission Accounting and Control System it replaces, is compliant with federal regulations. Financial transactions on Phoenix are posted immediately to a general ledger.

"We are taking the lessons learned from the pilot phase of the project and anticipate making some changes—especially in the areas of training and user support," said Steve Crabtree, USAID's financial systems integration program manager.

Deploying Phoenix overseas is part of the Business Systems Modernization initiative, a key component of USAID's Business Transformation Plan. ★



Sherif Zohdi, USAID

USAID/Cairo's financial management team watched with bated breath as the first live Phoenix transaction took place August 10, 2004.

## Judge Mihm Honored by USAID

Federal District Court Judge Michael Mihm was honored by USAID for his decade-long volunteer efforts in building relationships between American and Russian judges through Agency-funded rule of law and judicial reform programs.

Mihm has advocated the need to build Russian legal institutions and have personal interaction between judges to develop an independent, ethical, and professional Russian judiciary.

"[Russian judges] do not have the same level of independence and professionalism that our judiciary has," said Mihm. But

through these exchanges, "they embrace the ideal that, with hard work and sacrifice, they can, over time, develop a judiciary that is honest, professional, and responsive to the needs of the people."

Mihm received USAID's Outstanding Citizen Achievement Citation at a ceremony in his hometown, Peoria, Ill., August 6.

More than 200 people attended, including elected public officials, state representatives, local media, Russian dignitaries, and Russian Americans. (See related story on p. 11.) ★

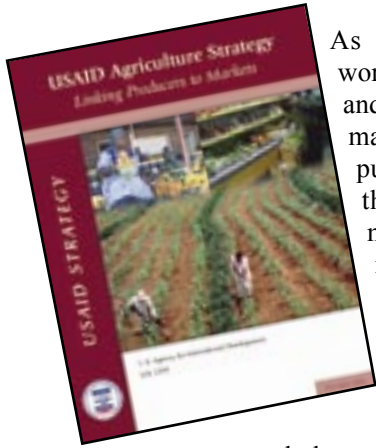
Sarah Berry contributed to this article.



Harry Edwards, USAID

Left to right: Assistant Administrator for Europe and Eurasia Kent Hill, Judge Mihm, and Assistant Administrator for Legislative and Public Affairs Edward Fox.

# New Agriculture Strategy to Help Small Farms Reach Global Markets



As increasing world population and farming of marginal lands put stress on the environment, and as regional and international trade have become an increasing part of life

around the world, USAID has developed a new agricultural strategy that focuses on issues like linking small farmers to wider markets and better managing natural resources like water and soil.

The keys to this strategy are good trade policies, using information technology in agribusiness and agricultural education, and reaching out to women in agriculture.

The strategy urges governments to help farmers own their land and equipment, secure loans, and sell crops to the highest bidder. Extension officers should help agricultural wholesalers and processors meet food safety standards, and governments

must encourage trade across borders with a minimum of tariffs and corruption, the strategy says.

Connecting markets across borders can boost economic growth in an entire region, as food and grain move to areas of scarcity, keeping crop prices higher for farmers with a bumper crop and consumer food prices down in shortage areas. So USAID assistance should promote regional market linkages, said Jeff Hill, senior advisor in the Bureau for Africa.

Concentrating resources heavily on countries with sound policies is a new approach for the Agency, said John Becker of the Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination. Before, the focus was more on assisting small and medium-sized farmers and processors to compete and export.

An example of the new approach is Central America, where several countries signed the Central America Free Trade Agreement with the United States in early 2004. With policies that favor commercial agriculture and exports in place there, USAID is expanding support of agriculture-related programs.

In Africa—where most aid dollars are assigned to HIV/AIDS, maternal and child health, or humanitarian programs—USAID

will invest scarce agricultural funding in a handful of countries with the most market-oriented agricultural policies under the President's Initiative to End Hunger in Africa. Other countries will be served through programs run by the Agency's regional missions that will stress market integration, Becker said.

At the same time, whenever possible, humanitarian aid will go toward long-term solutions to chronic food shortages. That might mean promoting policy reform, offering food for work, or marketing drought-resistant seeds to vulnerable farmers.

For instance, in the fragile ecology of the Horn of Africa, agricultural productivity goes hand-in-hand with good management of natural resources. "Agricultural expansion can have real environmental costs, so our focus needs to be on sound farming practices while scaling up for commercial viability," said Becker.

Improving water management practices is one way of doing this in the Horn. In other countries, government pricing policies might be crucial.

"Natural resource management is an integral part of the agriculture strategy," said Emmy Simmons, Assistant Administrator

for Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade. "We need more robust measures of agricultural productivity—not just yield per acre but also a 'crop per drop' measure," said Simmons, referring to irrigation.

The strategy also urges USAID project officers to recognize the barriers women face despite their domination of the sector in many societies by designing projects that help women farmers and processors gain access to land, equipment, information, and credit.

When submitting strategies, missions and other Agency operating units will need to demonstrate that their agricultural projects will

- link to market trends, whether at the global, regional, or local level
- improve natural resource management
- make use of science and technology
- attend to needs of rural communities and vulnerable groups

The strategy has been sent to field missions and is being presented at events around the world starting October 2004. Drafted by USAID agricultural and food security specialists, especially Tom Hobgood, the strategy was approved July 30, 2004.

(See related story on page 6.) ★



Conservation International

A Mexican coffee farmer picks coffee cherries in the El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve.



Karla Christensen, USAID

Members of the Women's Metaj Dairy Cooperative show off some of their dairy cows. Arsino Zaka (right) is president of the 45-member cooperative.

## Improving Natural Resource Management

Farmers in the buffer zone of Mexico's El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve are producing environmentally friendly coffee and getting higher prices for it. USAID, Starbucks Coffee Company, and Conservation International are working with El Triunfo coffee farmers to promote growing coffee under the shade of trees, preventing soil erosion, protecting streams, and conserving habitat for wildlife.

The program works with six cooperatives and more than 1,000 coffee farmers cultivating over 3,000 hectares to improve the quality of their coffee and update their business practices. Starbucks bought nearly 1.7 million pounds of green coffee directly from the cooperatives in 2003 and sold it under the brand names, Commitment to Origins, Shade Grown Mexico, and Decaf Shade Grown Mexico. ★

## Working with Rural Communities and Vulnerable Groups

Rural women in Albania have improved the health of their cows and increased the quality and quantity of milk produced. Land O'Lakes, with support from the Agency, trained more than 8,000 women in sanitation, milk quality testing, preventing mastitis and other diseases, dairy breeding, and business management skills.

As milk production increased, milk-cooling tanks and simple milk-testing laboratory equipment were installed to improve collection. Many of these milk collection systems are owned and operated by cooperatives. Albanian dairy products have since gained a bigger share of the regional market. ★

## ECONOMIC GROWTH, AGRICULTURE, AND TRADE

## Rice Yields Grow, Fertilizer Reduced



Tom Thompson, IFDC

A rice farmer in Bangladesh places a briquette made of 1–3 grams of fertilizer between rice plants, trapping nitrogen gases under the mud.

Rice farmers in Bangladesh increased yields up to 25 percent, using “urea deep placement” (UDP) technology, planting briquettes of fertilizer into the soil rather than strewing it freely over plants. While labor-intensive upfront, burying the fertilizer deeply into the mud meant less waste, lower overall costs, and less time spent reapplying fertilizer and weeding.

Fertilizer is crucial to large yields for both irrigated and rain-fed rice. Its purchase represents up to 30 percent of farmers’ out-of-pocket production costs. But typically only one-third of nitrogen fertilizer actually gets absorbed by rice plants, research showed. The rest escapes into the air as gas, runs off, leaches into the soil, or feeds weeds.

The UDP technology, developed by the International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) with funding from the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade, got at this problem by pressing fertilizer into briquettes.

Village fertilizer dealers used locally manufactured machines to make the briquettes out of ordinary, granular fertilizer. Farmers placed 1–3 gram briquettes between every fourth rice plant, in alternate rows, soon after planting the rice.

Well-suited for small-scale family farms, fertilizer briquettes were used by more than 550,000 rice growers in Bangladesh during 2004.

Rice is a staple food for more than 2 billion people. More than 90 percent is grown in Asia, where 80 percent of the world’s poor are concentrated, said Dr. Amit Roy, IFDC president and chief executive officer.

In the oxygen-poor mud, submerged nitrogen doesn’t escape as gas. Rice plant roots seek out the nitrogen, while shallow-rooted weeds steal less away.

“The stronger rice plants form a canopy that shadows the soil, so you get fewer weeds for that reason too,” said Dr. Thomas P. Thompson, IFDC senior sociologist.

The rice plants also have fewer “empty heads,” that is, more rice per plant.

**“The UDP technology is a winner for farmers, consumers, and the environment. With the increased efficiency of fertilizer use, producer costs are lowered, more food is produced, and less fertilizer escapes into the environment, where it is not needed.”**

George Gardner  
Senior Agricultural Economist  
Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade

In Bangladesh, yields increased 15–25 percent while spending for commercial fertilizer decreased by 24–32 percent for farmers using the fertilizer briquettes.

Benefits from burying briquettes deep were environmental as well as economic. Less nitrogen was released to the atmosphere and runoff losses were small. In comparison, large amounts of nitrogen were found in floodwater when fertilizer was strewn, IFDC found.

The technology, adopted by farmers in Vietnam and—most recently—Cambodia, can be used to grow banana, papaya, and vegetable crops. Ongoing work is funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development. ★

## GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

## Youth Computer Training Wins Award

**RAMALLAH, West Bank**—A public-private partnership that installed computer labs in 14 rural schools and trained more than 5,000 young people and more than 200 teachers in information technology won the UN Habitat/Dubai Municipality International Award for Best Practices to Improve the Living Environment.

The USAID-backed initiative also helped construct two community-based centers, which were used by about 1,000 young people last year. One center serves 11 small northern villages; the other is near three refugee camps in the central city of Ramallah.

USAID invested \$2.8 million in the IT4 Youth initiative, and \$1.4 million was added by the Finnish Children and Youth Foundation, other donors, and community contributions.

The Ramallah center is part of the Intel Computer Clubhouse Network, the first of its kind in the Arab world. The network—a collaboration between Intel and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology—runs multimedia and computer centers in underserved urban areas.

“This [center] ranks among the best I have seen in almost 10 years,” said Gail Breslow, director of a network of Intel centers, during a May 2004 visit. “The depth of commitment of mentors and the engagement of youth in creative self-expression are second to none.”

The initiative has seen its share of problems because it operates in regions of frequent armed conflict. Checkpoint closures and lack of road maintenance make

it difficult to visit project sites or conduct meetings.

Youth have difficulty in coming to the centers. Dr. Rafiq Husseini, who oversees the centers for the Welfare Association, said, “If conditions allowed, attendance at the northern [Ramallah] center would triple.”

One of the reasons the IT4 Youth initiative was recognized as a best practice program was its business plan, which calls for transfer of the centers to local ministries and organizations, as well as financial independence through revenue-generating models.

The Welfare Association runs the northern center and intends for it to finance its own operations through membership fees, individual and company sponsorships, funding from the budgets of local village councils, and donations from local businesses.

Technology initiatives are crucial to train the region’s youth in the absence of a peace process, said Bill Reese, the chief operation officer of the International Youth Foundation.

“We can’t give up on the West Bank,” he said. “Sooner or later they have to have their young people prepared for a market economy, and computer centers for youth are taking the first steps towards that end.”

The 2004 Dubai International Award for Best Practices collected some 2,000 stories about technology successfully advancing development. There were 680 finalists for the award this year. Each of the 10 winners was awarded \$30,000. ★



Raed Yacoub, Welfare Association

Palestinian youth gather around a computer at the community-based Intel Computer Clubhouse center in Ramallah. The center is located near three refugee camps.

## DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

## USAID Awards Iraq Grants for Elections, NGOs, Parliament



Staff Sgt. Jacob N. Bailey, U.S. Air Force  
Iraq's President, Sheik Ghazi al-Yawar, speaks to delegates at the Iraqi National Conference in Baghdad, Iraq, August 15, 2004.

While Iraqi officials and political factions selected the 100 members of an interim national council, the USAID mission in Baghdad awarded new grants worth as much as \$213 million to aid the new legislature and executive with constitutional drafting, elections, and civic education.

Democracy Officers Bruce Abrams and Stephen Brager—detailed to the mission from Colombia and Peru—helped the new Iraqi government work more democratically and effectively.

The new interim national council members were chosen at a national conference in mid-August. The councilors were drawn mainly from the former Iraqi Governing Council and Iraq's largest political parties.

The interim council will approve the 2005 Iraqi budget, advise the interim Iraqi president and Council of Ministers, exercise oversight on the Iraqi government, and appoint replacements to the presidency or council, if needed.

Agency experts with experience in other transition states commented on draft designs for the USAID democracy and governance projects and helped select winning bids by assistance providers. Democracy, conflict, and regional specialists from across the Agency came together for a weekly conference call that helped the small team in Baghdad.

The conference call, nicknamed the huddle, is co-chaired by the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance and the Bureau for Asia and the Near East.

The other major challenge that the democracy officers in Baghdad faced was not being able to travel around the country and interview local experts and citizens. They therefore built flexibility into grants to adapt to changing circumstances or better information.

A main goal of U.S. aid is to help the Iraqi government get public input on the constitution, new laws, and institutions. Another goal is to educate the public about an independent judiciary, media, and federal system, Abrams said.

The constitution will be drafted by a legislative assembly to be elected January 2005.

The new grants include

- \$18 million for voter education and election monitors to the International Republican Institute (IRI), the National Democratic Institute (NDI), and the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES)

- \$20 million—possibly going up to \$60 million—to advise the transitional government, won by IRI, NDI, the American Bar Association, and the State University of New York at Albany

- \$48 million to help Iraqi NGOs work on corruption, human rights, women's rights, and civic education, won by America's Development Foundation, which also trains TV, radio, and newspaper managers

- \$40 million to IFES to support the newly formed Independent Election Commission of Iraq ★

## GLOBAL HEALTH

## 80 Million African Children to Get Polio Vaccine This Fall

Polio—which had been almost completely wiped off the face of the earth by the vaccine developed in the 1950s—has broken out anew in several African countries, setting off a campaign to immunize 80 million children in 23 countries this month and in November.

The intensified campaign to fight the virus comes as new cases were confirmed in Guinea, Mali, and Sudan, bringing the number of African countries where the disease has spread to 12.

Polio is highly infectious, and spreads through a virus that invades the nervous system and can cause total paralysis in a matter of hours. The disease mainly affects children under age 3. Prior to 1988, the disease paralyzed some 1,000 children per day worldwide.

As of mid-September, there were 668 cases of polio in 16 countries, compared to 332 cases in 8 countries at the same time last year, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). Most of the cases—518 of them—were in Nigeria. Some 19 cases also were confirmed in Niger, and another 53 in 10 countries across Africa previously considered polio-free.

“The polio epidemic may approach or exceed 1,500 cases in Africa in 2004—this is a tragedy for African children,” said USAID's Polio Eradication Coordinator Ellyn Ogden.

The polio campaigns in 22 African countries, set for October 8–11 and November 20–23, are valued at \$100 million. The Global Polio Eradication Initiative—spearheaded by WHO, UNICEF, the U.S. Centers

for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and Rotary International, and working with host governments and NGOs—has invested \$5 billion in the campaign since its inception in 1988.

U.S. foreign assistance through USAID and CDC has accounted for 40 percent of the initiative's funding.

The campaigns aim to immunize every child under age 5. Challenges the initiative will face vary by country—from shortage of supplies or personnel to lack of transport or civil strife. In some countries, cultural practices prohibit unrelated men or strangers to enter a house in the absence of a male relative.

To overcome these barriers, countries are to be advised to train vaccinators to consider gender and ethnic and religious customs, said Ogden. Community leaders have been known to delay or halt immunization, as happened in Nigeria's Kano state a year ago.

But Ogden is optimistic. Countries are improving training of vaccinators, mobilizing health ministries, and involving local and religious leaders to ensure that as many children as possible are vaccinated, she said.

Immunization campaigns have reduced polio cases worldwide, from 350,000 in 1988 to 784 cases at the end of 2003.

Polio has never been eradicated in six countries—Niger, Nigeria, Egypt, Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan.

Polio existed in 125 countries when immunization efforts began. ★

[www.polioeradication.org](http://www.polioeradication.org)



Ellyn Ogden, USAID  
Afghanistan National Immunization Days, October 2002. USAID Worldwide Polio Eradication Coordinator Ellyn Ogden administers vitamin A and polio drops to a child during the launch of the campaign in Kabul, while a nurse snips off the top of a vitamin A capsule.

# 3.7 Million Refugees Return to Afghanistan

**KABUL, Afghanistan**—Trucks laden with refugees from Pakistan and Iran bring hundreds of Afghan families back to their homeland each day. Month by month they flow back home, joining the biggest voluntary repatriation of refugees in modern world history, according to the U.N. High Commission for Refugees.

Already 3.7 million Afghans have returned from refugee camps since the Taliban's repressive rule ended November 2001. More than 120,000 returned in July 2004 alone.

Supported by USAID and other U.S. agencies, the refugees get vaccinations against infectious diseases, a lesson on the dangers of land mines, and transport back to hometowns and villages. They also get \$13 dollars in cash, food for six months, and other help to restart their lives.

In the northern city Mazar-I Sharif, the principal of Nau Behar School says enrollment has increased since the Taliban were defeated: from 400 students, when only boys could go to school, to 2,500. Many of the additional students were refugees. The school, thanks to USAID, is newly painted and outfitted with new desks.

Another sign of new life in this ancient land, which once ruled most of India under the Moghul Emperor Babur in the 1500s, can be seen along the highway leading into Kabul from the northern Shomali plains. Truck after truck rolls by, laden with building stone, bricks, and gravel. A construction boom has seized Afghanistan; everywhere people are making bricks and cement blocks.

Much construction is of privately funded homes and markets. But, in a combination of education and physical reconstruction, workers finished a dormitory funded by the Agency for 1,100 girls at Kabul University. Girls who had been thrown out of their elementary and high schools by the Taliban



Syed Jan Sabawoon, USAID

Some of the 3.7 million refugees—returning to Afghanistan voluntarily from Pakistan and Iran since the fall of the Taliban in 2001—ride trucks heading back to their hometowns and villages. They have just visited a U.N. center in Kabul to receive vaccinations, advice on avoiding landmines, and about \$13 for each family member.

are now returning to classes around the country.

With \$8 billion pledged by the United States and other donors at the Berlin conference in May 2004, Afghans are making huge leaps forward:

- Dozens of new newspapers and radio stations are putting out news reports and information, their journalists trained by international aid and media groups.
- Afghan expatriates from the United States, Australia, Pakistan, and elsewhere are investing in construction of hotels and other enterprises.
- A new currency introduced with U.S. assistance as well as a respected finance ministry leadership created by the interim

government have boosted confidence for investors.

- Agriculture is getting a big boost from U.S. and other aid programs that are dredging hundreds of miles of canals, fixing water gates and control mechanisms, digging wells, and beefing up channels that block seasonal flood waters from destroying roads.
- A new asphalt surface has been installed on more than 300 miles of the main

ring road linking Kabul to Kandahar. Hundreds of miles of secondary roads are being graded, graveled, or paved, allowing villages to market their crops and cutting the cost of delivering fertilizer and other supplies. ★

*Editorial Director Ben Barber was recently in Afghanistan, where he researched and wrote these stories.*

## Afghan Women Visit Clinics

**CHARIKAR, Afghanistan**—Women wearing blue burkas crowd the health education room at the new clinic, their children staying close and respectful as they wait for the nurse to begin the lesson.

Nafasgul, 32, (she uses one name as do many Afghans) walked the two miles from her home with her son Firdouz, 2, who has a stomachache, nausea, diarrhea, and can't sleep—typical symptoms of worms or other intestinal diseases that waste millions in Afghanistan and the rest of Asia.

“During the Taliban time, we couldn't even leave the house to do minor things for ourselves. Now we leave the house to do our things—to take the children to a doctor, go to the market, visit relatives, or take the kids to a park in the evenings and simply walk around,” she said through an interpreter.

The clinic is the first of 226 being built by contractors hired by USAID, one of several aid groups renovating and building clinics and hospitals, training Afghan nurses and doctors, and providing clean, piped water systems. Aid groups also work with the Ministry of Health to train senior staff and

district health officers.

“Now the donors give money directly to NGOs such as MSH [Management Sciences for Health] and CHF, which operate primary healthcare,” said Peter Saleh, a Farsi-speaking U.S. healthcare advisor to the Afghan government.

“The goal is to prepare the Ministry of Health to take over delivery of healthcare.”

Afghanistan has dismal vital statistics: life expectancy is 46, and child mortality is among the highest in the world.

The Taliban turned back the calendar of medical services 100 years, including barring women nurses and doctors from their jobs.

U.S. aid programs have rehabilitated 72 health clinics, birth centers, and hospitals; provided funding to UNICEF to treat 700,000 cases of malaria; vaccinated 4.26 million children against measles and polio, likely preventing some 20,000 deaths; and provided basic health services to more than 2 million people in 21 provinces.

Two women's hospitals in Kabul are also being rehabilitated. ★

## USAID Helping Farmers

**JALALABAD, Afghanistan**—The chugging sound of a tractor turning the soil comes through the heat of the afternoon in a village outside Jalalabad, capital of Nangarhar province.

Corn grows thick and tall in the fields, along with tomatoes, potatoes, onions, wheat, rice, and other crops. Unlike much of Afghanistan, which is rock and sand, parched by drought or the arid climate, Nangarhar province is irrigated by the Kunar and Kabul rivers, which bring melted snows racing off the Hindu Kush mountains toward the Indus River in neighboring Pakistan.

Malik Mohammad Ayub, 50, a landowner in Akhund village, stands in front of a sign announcing an aid program to distribute seeds and fertilizer. He recalls, “There was a lot of fighting here—against the Russians and among the mujahideen.

“Now peace has arrived,” he said.

Agriculture remains the main occupation of Afghans, and any effort to restore the economic and social life of the Afghan people must focus on farms.

The drought from 1998 to 2002—and another that parched fields this year—along with the effect of 25 years of war destroyed 50 percent of orchards, 60 percent of livestock, and 50 percent of irrigation systems.

Some 80 percent of roads were damaged,

5 million Afghans fled into exile, government was uprooted, and people turned to growing poppy for opium.

Since the fall of the Taliban, USAID and many other foreign assistance agencies have been repairing roads and canals and providing seed and advice to farmers as they replant fields and harvest their crops.

USAID has invested \$153 million over three years in the Rebuilding Agricultural Markets Program (RAMP), which has, in one year, fixed 305 kilometers of canals, improved irrigation for 305,000 hectares of land, fixed 110 kilometers of farm-to-market roads, opened more than 100 market centers, treated or vaccinated 2.5 million livestock, and provided extension services to half a million farmers.

A key goal of agricultural assistance is to end the growing of poppy, which is worth an estimated \$2 billion and has become the country's largest source of income. Britain has taken the lead for the coalition forces in fighting poppy, which is grown in 28 out of 32 Afghan provinces, said Sayed Ghulfran, director of the U.N.-sponsored agency Narcotic Control and Rehabilitation of Afghanistan. This year's crop is expected to yield 3,600 tons of opium, about 75 percent of the world's heroin. Last year, about 3,400 tons of opium was produced. ★



## Thirst for Education Has Quadrupled School Enrollments



Afghan schoolgirls.

**MAZAR-I SHARIF, Afghanistan**—The Nau Behar School here has pitched tents in the playground and seats its students in three shifts. The school had 400 students when the Taliban ruled Afghanistan, just three years ago. This August, 2,500 students—boys and girls—enrolled, according to headmaster Ghulam Yashiya.

Although the school was newly painted and rehabilitated under a USAID grant, it will need to be enlarged to accommodate the new students, many back from refugee camps in Pakistan and Iran.

In another part of Mazar, which sits astride the ancient Silk Road linking China with Europe, Anif Azhari, 15, sits in his classroom at the Lycee Bakhter and opens up

a book printed by USAID and distributed by UNESCO throughout the country. “We all want to go to the university and become doctors or engineers and serve our country,” said Azhari, as his classmates nodded in agreement. Here too, tents have been added to accommodate the overflow of students.

Aid groups are pouring more than \$100 million into new textbooks, rehabilitating or building new schools, helping more than 170,000 students catch up for the lost years when the Taliban ruled, and training more than 20,000 teachers with radio programs and seminars.

Some \$9 million of U.S. aid has gone into a new dormitory for 1,100 women students at Kabul University. And at Balkh University in Mazar, the major learning institution in northern Afghanistan, where no women were allowed to study until the Taliban were ousted, 40 percent of students are women, such as engineering student Shekiba Khoram, 22.

“Some people don’t want women to have the same rights as men,” she said. “Rights are not given. We should get it. We should try to get our freedom, our rights.”

In outlying districts of Balkh province, officials say that although they have 200 or 300 schools, only 10 or 15 percent of them have buildings. The rest meet under trees or crude shelters. Eighty percent of schools were damaged or destroyed during the Taliban rule.

Afghanistan now has 102,000 teachers but needs 30,000 more, especially in rural areas. Columbia University is helping train Afghan teachers, school principals, and education planners in the ministry. ★

## Economic Revival Boosts Banks, Factories, Farms, and Markets

**KABUL, Afghanistan**—The first customers are trickling in to Afghanistan’s newest private bank, Afghanistan International Bank, where officials say they hope to install the country’s first ATM machine.

Already the bank is dispensing small agricultural loans for USAID and working with the international financial giant ING to begin backing up letters of credit so international trade can get started, according to John W. Haye, CEO of the new bank.

Afghanistan’s economy was crippled by years of war and isolation—for many years the Taliban government was recognized by only two countries. The removal of the Taliban in 2001 and the creation of an internationally recognized government through the Loya Jirga process led foreign advisors, investors, aid agencies, and Afghan officials to begin rebuilding a modern economy on the ruins left by the wars and Taliban rule.

In late 2002, U.S. aid programs paid some \$8 million to collect the old currency, which was nearly worthless, and replaced it with new bills at a ratio of 1,000 old Afghanis per each new Afghani.

In March 2003, USAID awarded international financial consulting firm BearingPoint Inc. a \$39.9 million contract to help the Afghan government promote economic development. This followed a January 2003 World Bank contract to the same firm to help Afghan ministries upgrade their accounting systems.

BearingPoint will focus on

- fiscal reform—assisting the Afghan government to move toward financial independence through reforms to its tax



Afghan official shows off newly minted Afghanis, the reissued Afghan currency.

policy, administration, and budget planning

- banking reform—helping the central bank build credibility and autonomy as it provides regulations for the reemergence of commercial banks

- trade policy—creating trade reforms and policies that promote private sector investment and export-led growth

- legal and regulatory framework—reworking the commercial legal framework necessary in a market-led economy and the regulations governing water, power, and telecommunications

- private sector development—helping the government stimulate private sector development of commercial, industrial, and financial enterprises ★



Syed Jan Sabawoon, USAID

**KABUL CONSTRUCTION BOOM:** New roads, homes, factories, and schools are being built all over Afghanistan. The foundation for infrastructure reconstruction was laid by USAID’s repair of the country’s most important highway running 300 miles from Kabul to Kandahar. The next major project is rebuilding the road from Kandahar to Herat. On the road north from Kabul to Mazar-i-Sharif, repairs are underway at the 11,000-foot high Salang Tunnel through the Hindu Kush mountains—a chokepoint linking the north and south and an eventual trade link between south and central Asia.

Most of the Afghan people live within 30 miles of the Ring Road linking its four major cities. The Ministry of Reconstruction and Rural Development says that 4,000 local councils or shuras have been formed, where communities decide what they need and receive small grants of about \$30,000–\$60,000. Bridges, roads, culverts, schools, water projects, and training centers for weaving and tailoring are among the projects.

## AFRICA

# Angolan Amputees Play Basketball

**LUENA, Angola**—Benedito Cacoma Boeis was 12 when he walked down to the river for a swim. His friends were already in the water, laughing and urging him to join them. Benedito started wading in. A mine exploded, destroying his legs.

After both his legs were amputated above the knee, Benedito was brought to the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAFA) center. The USAID-funded center provided him with a wheelchair and encouraged him to stay fit and focused by playing wheelchair basketball.

Last year, VVAFA also provided a wheelchair to Ido "Lito" Elias, who appears to have suffered from polio at a very young age. Now 15, Lito is a fit and aggressive basketball player, spinning in circles and popping wheelies in between quarters.

VVAFA also works with the disabled in Ethiopia, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Central America.

In Angola, VVAFA was careful to choose a location for its center that was among the most heavily mined during the long conflict, which ended April 2002.

The country has some of the worst human development indicators in the world.

"We chose Moxico because it was considered one of the provinces most affected by

war," said Anita Keller, one of the VVAFA coordinators. "On the other hand, it was a region where there was no assistance to victims of mines and other undetonated devices."

Estimates of the number of landmines in Angola range from 5 million to 10 million, making it possibly the most heavily mined country in the world. Some 70,000 Angolans are believed to have lost limbs in landmine explosions. From 1997 to 2002, some 1,500 prostheses were distributed by the VVAFA center.

VVAFA started working in Moxico province in 1996, but activities have now expanded into Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul.

The center offers a variety of healthcare services. It also offers recreational and sports activities through its Sports for Life program, which aims to show Angolans that disabled people can still be active and productive.

Benedito has been with the program from the start. He is now 22. He not only plays, but has been given responsibilities such as providing water for the team and leading warmup exercises.

In November, the Moximo team, Angola's youngest, took fourth place in a national championship.



USAID/Angola

Ido "Lito" Elias plays wheelchair basketball as part of the USAID-funded Sports For Life program.

"Our brightest hope at the moment is the athletes themselves," said Keller.

"Given the space to practice and the basic equipment, we believe they will continue on their own, as long as competition continues

at the national level."

USAID funded a similar program for a wheelchair basketball team in Lubango and, when that program ended, the team continued to play on their own initiative. ★

## LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

# Computer, Theater Training Pave Way to Better Future for Brazil's At-Risk Youth

**BRASILIA, Brazil**—Dance lessons and computer training sessions are helping thousands of Brazil's young people overcome social exclusion and get jobs.

In Fortaleza, for instance, children from poor families learn ballet at the Dance and So

cial Integration School for Children and Adolescents.

"We come here for ballet classes, computer lessons, tutorial programs, rehearsals, and lunch," said Stefania Pereira, a 15-year-

old participant.

USAID, through the Displaced Children and Orphans' Fund, has invested some \$11 million in more than 70 such youth projects in the past decade.

The programs

- work with 35,000 children and adolescents in poor neighborhoods in northeast Brazil and Brasília, the capital
- support a network of NGOs carrying out programs
- work with local governments to improve

existing youth-at-risk projects

To date, USAID's at-risk program in Brazil has won additional support of more than \$3 million from bilateral and multilateral donors and local companies.

"We join forces with the government of Brazil and local civil society to disseminate best practices and enhance existing programs," said Nena Lentini of USAID/Brazil.

The Agency has assisted the Brazilian government in designing public policies to decrease violence against children and help youth find work.

Some 41 percent of 182 million Brazilians are under 21. Many youth come from poor families, do not attend school, and face difficulties attaining job skills. Some 15 percent of children aged 7-14 are obliged by poverty to work.

About 96 percent of children attend primary school, but many poor children enter the educational system late and attend classes irregularly, said Lentini. Nearly a fifth of students drop out. Girls are especially at risk, since they are easy prey for trafficking and prostitution rings.

Many youth-at-risk programs use art education to attract youth living in the streets, victims of sexual abuse, child laborers, school dropouts, and those with broken

family ties. Other projects offer computer training skills and job placement.

Of the children and youth that USAID programs reach, the vast majority attend school and regularly complete grades, according to recently collected data. Some 85 percent of graduates from USAID-supported vocational training programs find jobs.

Diosmar Filho, for instance, got involved with the art education project in Salvador, the capital of the Bahia state, at age 16. Today he is 26, and works with youth-at-risk programs.

"I was hired as an administrative assistant," he recalled. "[It was] a dream for me, and a reason for my family to be proud."

In Recife, USAID supports a program preparing youth to enter the job market as computer technicians.

Fifty boys and girls from poor neighborhoods are participating: they hone their communication skills and they are taught how to set up and upgrade computer systems, install software, and manage and troubleshoot computer networks.

This pilot program offers counseling and internships and helps place students into jobs. It is also developing a methodology for disadvantaged youth training that has the potential to be scaled up. ★



Mila Petrillo

Gilson Assis performs in a play about HIV/AIDS prevention in a program through the USAID-funded Adolescents' Integral Reference Center in Salvador.

## ASIA AND THE NEAR EAST

# Water-Saving Course Led Jordanian Women to Become Plumbers

**AMMAN, Jordan**—Khawla Al Sheikh is a tall, well-dressed, attractive blonde with flashing eyes and a charming smile. She is also one of Jordan's first women plumbers.

Some 110 women participated in a course that trained them to perform simple home water audits and educate people about water conservation. Al Sheikh was among 33 of them who went on to participate in home maintenance and plumbing training. Seven of the women took an even further step, enrolling in a licensing course in plumbing at the vocational training center. They prompted the center to establish a women's plumbing program as a formal course, and they will soon be licensed plumbers.

Women are the target group for the Water Efficiency and Public Education for Action (WEPIA) program, because a 2000 USAID program on public awareness about water conservation found women—those who are homemakers or unemployed—were its largest and most concerned audience.

Now Jordanian women who wish plumbing help no longer have to wait for their husbands to call a male plumber and be present during the plumber's visit.

Jordan has long suffered from water scarcity. The amount of water delivered to homes barely meets requirements for basic house-

hold chores such as cooking, cleaning, and hygiene. But annual water consumption, as low as it is, still exceeds renewable supplies, and groundwater tables are being depleted at an alarming rate.

WEPIA works with women NGOs to train women to educate people about water scarcity. The program developed simple flip-charts for the women that describe Jordan's water sector; technologies that reduce water use without affecting lifestyles; and a step-by-step method for calculating home use and water savings that might result from installing an aerator, a low-flow showerhead, or a replacement for a leaky toilet cistern.

Participants are trained as sales agents for simple, cheap, easily installed water-saving devices marketed in private homes. The income for the female sales agents ranges from \$7.50 to more than \$300 per month, depending on sales.

The water-saving devices can reduce water use by 35 percent.

"Selling [water-saving devices] is the first job in my life," said Al Sheikh. "It shaped my personality. I became more confident and I learned how to deal with people."

The WEPIA program, in which USAID invested \$10.5 million over four years, also trained 120 *waethat*—women lay preachers—



Khawla Al Sheikh broke all stereotypes and embarked on a career as a plumber.

to help them educate parishioners about water conservation. The program also developed *The Imam's Guide to Water Conservation*, which invokes the sacred writings of Islam to guide the *waethat*.

"Only a woman can sell to women," said Al Sheikh, who sold 208 water-saving devices in three months and has new orders piling up.

"What made me succeed is that I believe in [them]."

More than 50,000 women have been reached by water conservation programs funded by the Agency in the past two years.

WEPIA is implemented by The Academy for Educational Development. ★

## EUROPE AND EURASIA

# U.S.-Russia Exchanges Promote Rule of Law

**MOSCOW**—Hundreds of Russian judges have visited the United States to meet with American judges through U.S. programs promoting the rule of law, while dozens of judges from Illinois to Florida have made similar visits to courts in Russia.

"The discussions were very theoretical [when the program began]—what kinds of institutions might work best in a democ-

racy, how do you create the proper tension among the three branches of government so that no one branch gets too powerful," said Judge Michael Mihm, who hosted several delegations of Russian judges at his home in Illinois.

"Now the discussions we have are primarily about nuts and bolts," he said.

USAID supports judicial exchange pro-

grams, in partnership with Russia's Council of Judges, and in collaboration with the Library of Congress's Open World program, which has sent more than 700 Russian judges and legal professionals to the United States.

The joint efforts of USAID and the council support judicial exchanges, link Russian judicial organizations and councils with similar groups in the United States, and train judges.

U.S. assistance has helped shape the terms of Russian legislation such as the civil code that defines the basic property rights and the fundamentals of business relations. U.S. lawyers also advised Russia's Ministry of Finance through the waves of drafts and revisions that produced Russia's 1999 tax code.

Drafters of the criminal procedure code, which mandates jury trials nationwide in serious criminal cases, drew on the experience with USAID-supported pilot programs in nine regions of Russia.

Rule of law programs have also helped establish legal clinics at Russia's law schools. The clinics are staffed by Russian law students who get practical training while offering free or low-cost legal advice to citizens.

Russia's six-year-old Judicial Department

of the Supreme Court has hired and trained more than 2,500 court administrators, and a USAID-funded pilot program is moving toward adoption of national norms for case management and court administration.

The rule of law program has changed the way Russian judges perceive themselves, Mihm said. Under communism, Russia's judicial branch was not independent, and was frequently influenced or run by the executive branch. Because of this, judges were considered biased.

"From my perspective, the most important thing that has changed is the people themselves," Mihm said. "I think many of the Russian judges now have a much better sense of who they are."

Still, Mihm said, there remains work to be done with rule of law in Russia. Even if the judicial branch is stronger, its work largely depends on the efficiency of the executive and legislative branches.

"It goes without saying [that] this program is very important for Russian judges," said Justice Yuriy Ivanovich Sidorenko, chairman of the Council of Judges of the Russian Federation and a longtime participant in USAID's rule of law programs.

"It's important to know you are not by yourself and you have friends across the ocean." (See related article on p. 4.) ★



Harry Edwards, USAID

American judges converse with their Russian counterparts through teleconferences such as this one.

*July 11, 2004–August 21, 2004*

**PROMOTED**

Mohamed K. Abdou  
Nathan J. Blanchet  
Jeanne M. Briggs  
Carol Chan  
Michael W. Clinebell  
Jeffrey Alan Cochrane  
Larry P. Cork Jr.  
Alisa J. Dunn  
Frances M. Erby  
Tryfan D. Evans  
Gabriel F. Grau  
Jerry L. Hintz  
Michael Hutchinson  
Hugo A. Jimenez  
Callie Mae Johnson

**MOVED ON**

Sundaa A. Bridgett  
Robert M. Cull  
Constance E. Lykes  
Michael A. Magan  
Ismael Martinez  
Ginelle Nelson  
Brent E. Omdahl  
Lindberg Williams Jr.  
Ernest Wilson  
Kimberly A. Zelonis

**RETIRED**

Letitia Kelly Butler  
Sharon K. Dittman  
Corbett M. Flannery  
William D. McKinney  
Daniel R. Rathbun

**REASSIGNED**

**Christine Adamczyk**  
Egypt/HDD/ET to COMP/LWOP

**Stephen C. Allen**  
RSC/OD to Ukraine/D

**Vathani Amirthanayagam**  
GH/RCS to REDSO/ESA/PH

**Gerald Richard Andersen**  
Caucasus to COMP/FS/Reassign

**Yohannes A. Araya**  
OIG/A/IT&SA to RIG/Pretoria

**Randall Y. Ase**  
OIG/A/PA to RIG/Baghdad

**Thomas C. Asmus**  
OIG/A/HL&C to OIG/AIG/MCC

**Michael A. Austin**  
M/IRM/CIS to M/PMO/ETI

**Douglas Hillary Ball**  
Honduras/DP to Namibia

**Henry Lee Barrett**  
OIG/A/HL&C to OIG/AIG/MCC

**Richard A. Barth**  
OIG/A/HL&C to OIG/AIG/MCC

**Susan M. Baxter**  
OIG/A/HL&C to OIG/AIG/MCC

**Dan W. Blumhagen**  
PPC/SPP/SPA to WB/GAZA

**Freddy A. Blunt Jr.**  
M/PMO to M/PMO/BEA

**Bruce N. Boyer**  
RIG/Manila to OIG/AIG/A

**Tanya J. Broadnax**  
M/AS/IRD to M/MPI/MIC

**Christine Marie Byrne**  
RIG/San Salvador to RIG/Baghdad

**Brian L. Carney**  
Namibia to RCSA/EXO

**Kenneth J. Collins**  
Caucasus to Iraq/OFM

**Bruno Cornelio, Jr.**  
Indonesia/PED to Ethiopia/ANR

**Gerard M. Custer**  
OIG/A/HL&C to RIG/Baghdad

**Kirk M. Dahlgren**  
Namibia to El Salv/SDO

**Carrie V. Dailey**  
Benin/D to Guinea/EXO

**Aimee M. David**  
M/PMO to M/PMO/BEA

**Dirk W. Dijkerman**  
RS/Africa/OD to COMP/Detail/SUP

**Anne M. Dix**  
Guatemala/RD to El Salv/S01

**Michael E. Doctor**  
M/IRM/SDM to M/PMO/BTIP

**Lawrence W. Dolan**  
Bangladesh/DG to Ghana/EHRD

**Timothy J. Donnay**  
COMP/NE/OJT to Ghana/PPD

**Byron J. Drake**  
M/HR/POD/Team 5 to M/HR/POD

**Kenneth Duckworth**  
Ethiopia/PROG to REDSO/ESA/PDPS

**Margaret Dula**  
Egypt/PROC to COMP/FS/Reassign

**REASSIGNED**

**David E. Eckerson**  
PPC/SPP to M/HR/OD

**Braden W. Enroth**  
Guatemala/CO to El Salv/OCG

**Michael Farbman**  
COMP/FS/Reassign to COMP/Detail/SUP

**Susan F. Fine**  
Senegal/PROG to ANE/SPO/SPPM

**Martin Fischer**  
Peru/D to Ghana/OD

**William S. Foerderer**  
FRY to Indonesia/PED

**Toraanna Francis**  
LAC/SPO to AA/LAC

**Jeannie Friedmann**  
Bangladesh/PHN to Zambia/D

**Theodore V. Gehr**  
Bolivia/SOS to India/PS

**Mark W. Gellerson**  
EGAT/EG/EPG to Egypt/EG

**James L. Goggin**  
Iraq/OD to Caucasus

**Gregory C. Gottlieb**  
DCHA/OTI to DCHA/OFDA

**Willard L. Grizzard**  
Phil/OFM to COMP/FS/Reassign

**Abdoulaye Gueye**  
RIG/Cairo to OIG/A/IT&SA

**Beverly A. Hadley**  
REDSO/ESA/LEG to RS/Africa/OD

**Sean P. Hall**  
Tanzania/D to Afghanistan/PDO

**Margaret A. Healey**  
Bangladesh/EXO to Ghana/MA

**Nicholas B. Higgins**  
COMP/NE/OJT to Caucasus

**Hugo A. Jimenez**  
RIG/San Salvador to OIG/A/PA

**F. Catherine Johnson**  
Caucasus to Romania

**Jessica Jordan**  
Iraq/ODP to Peru/OFA

**Deborah Kennedy Iraheta**  
Guatemala/D to ANE/EAA

**Kenneth W. Kerttula**  
M/PMO to M/PMO/BTIP

**Cheryl L. Kim**  
COMP/FS/Reassign to LAC/RSD

**Earell E. Kissinger**  
EGAT/EG/EDFM to USAID RDM/ASIA

**Ralph Koehring**  
COMP/NE/OJT to Bolivia/RCO

**Joel E. Kolker**  
RS Africa/SO4-5 E to Zimbabwe/PDIS

**Rebecca J. Krzywda**  
COMP/FS/Reassign to COMP/LWOP

**Raymond L. Lewman**  
Russia/BDI to Zambia/D

**Jennifer M. Link**  
Russia/DHRD to Iraq/ODP

**Fred McDonald**  
CA/PS to RCSA/RPIO

**Ana M. Meehan**  
DCHA/DG/CS to ANE/IR

**Paula S. Miller**  
PPC/SPP/SRC to COMP/LWOP

**Daniel C. Moore**  
Tanzania/D to Phil/OEM

**Richard Brad Moore**  
RIG/Budapest to RIG/Baghdad

**Charles S. Morgan**  
ANE/MEA to WB/Gaza

**Mark Steven Norman**  
RIG/Cairo to OIG/A/IT&SA

**Ronald E. Olsen**  
M/HR/PPIM to India/RASO

**Milan Pavlovic**  
COMP/NE/OJT to REDSO/ESA/LEG

**Alicia T. Pegues**  
RIG/Pretoria to OIG/MCC/PA

**Stephen A. Polkinghorn**  
M/IRM/SDM to M/PMO/ETI

**Ricky A. Pritchett**  
M/IRM/CIS to M/PMO/BTIP

**Jeanne Marie Pryor**  
ANE/ESA to ANE/SAA

**Thomas Y. Quan, Jr.**  
OIG/A/PA to RIG/Manila

**Raul J. Raymundo**  
RIG/Pretoria to RIG/Baghdad

**Alan I. Reed**  
Guatemala/EXO to Peru/EXO

**Leslie K. Reed**  
Peru/D to Ghana/OD

**James Walter Rorie Sr.**  
OIG/A/HL&C to OIG/A/PA

**Fatma A. Rose**  
RIG/Manila to RIG/Baghdad

**Lawrence J. Sacks**  
COMP/NE/OJT to Romania

## REASSIGNED

**Roshanak Salimi**

OIG/A/IT&amp;SA to RIG/Pretoria

**Frederic G. Scott**

WB/Gaza to Afghanistan/PDO

**Leigh Shamblin**

COMP/NE/OJT to Skopje

**Kathyrine R. Soliven**

OIG/A/IT&amp;SA to RIG/Pretoria

**Martha Erin Soto**

Peru/D to Senegal/D

**Karen J. Stone**

COMP/NE/OJT to Bosnia-Herz

**Zdenek L. Suda**

Ghana/PPD to Bolivia/SOS

**Mu O. Taalib**

OIG/A/PA to RIG/Cairo

**Gordon W. Tachuk**

RIG/Pretoria to RIG/Baghdad

**F. Wayne Tate**

M/HR/EM to COMP/Detail/SUP

**David J. Thompson**

COMP/NE/OJT to Albania

**Aye A. Thwin**

COMP/NE/OJT to Phil/PHN

**Leon S. Waskin**

USAID RDM/ASIA to Mongolia

**Roslyn Waters Jensen**

Romania to RCSA/RPIO

**Richard Whelden**

Guatemala/D to LAC/SPO

**William R. Wood Jr.**

M/IRM/IPA to M/PMO/BTIP

**George Zegarac**

REDSO/ESA/RFMC to RSC/RFMO

## IN MEMORIAM

**Osborne Hauge**, 90, died July 21 in Fairfax, Va. He served in the foreign service from 1961 to 1974, representing USAID throughout Asia. Hauge worked for the Bureau of the Budget for a decade before joining the Agency. He was the civilian chief of the local government branch of the Supreme Command for Allied Powers during the occupation of Japan after World War II. While there, Hauge started collecting ancient Japanese, Chinese, and Korean artwork. This lifelong interest in ancient and contemporary Asian art benefited the Sackler and Freer galleries, which received Hauge's wide-ranging collection of paintings, ceramics, and textiles.

**Robert Kenneth Rogers**, 75, died August 23 in Sun City Center, Fla. He was with USAID between 1959 and 1979, serving in Seoul, Rangoon, Karachi, Montevideo, Bangkok, and Monrovia.

**Robert Thomas "Tom" Rollis Jr.**, 67, died August 23 in DeWitt Township, Mich. He was with USAID between 1981 and

1994, serving as Assistant Administrator for Management until 1989. In the private sector, he worked in auditing and accounting for several car companies, and as controller for Michigan State University after leaving USAID. He was active in politics, and worked for many years with the Republican State Central Committee in Michigan.

**Myron George Smith**, 84, died July 6, 2004, in Richmond, Va. A soil scientist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture before joining USAID in 1962, Smith served in India, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Mali. He was also detailed to the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development in Washington, D.C., and retired from USAID in 1984. While on his first tour in Vietnam in 1964, Smith helped introduce "miracle rice," high-yielding varieties that were developed by the International Rice Research Institute. Upon retirement, Smith established his own agriculture management service, which he managed for five years.

## Mali Mission Director Honored

Pamela White, USAID's mission director in Mali, was recognized by African women for her leadership role in reducing maternal and infant mortality in the West African country.

White, who has led the mission for two years but has served in Mali since 2001, was given an award from Mali's first lady on behalf of the government. The award was part of the International Day for African Women, whose commemoration July 31 was organized by the Malian Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children, and the Family, and the West Africa Regional Secretariat of Pan-African Women's Organization.

USAID/Mali began a new program last year that aims to reduce under-five mortality, maternal mortality, and high fertility rates.

USAID's \$38.5 million program in Mali makes it one of the largest U.S. aid programs in Africa in 2004. White is the first woman director to serve in Mali.



H.E. Toure Lobbo Traore, first lady of Mali (left), presents an award to Pamela White (right) on behalf of the government of Mali

International Day for African Women was established by the United Nations in 1962 to mobilize decisionmakers at all levels to ensure African women's participation and rights in all aspects of social and economic development. ★

## Gordon West Retires

Gordon West, retiring in September as deputy assistant administrator for Asia and the Near East, has been a part of history in his 28-year career with USAID.

He led the first U.S. assistance delegation to the Baltics in September 1991, a month after the three former Soviet republics declared independence.

As deputy mission director in the Philippines, he helped open the General Santos airport in Mindanao to counter the island's separation from the rest of the country.

And with USAID health officer Michele Moloney-Kitts and the Royal Cambodian Army, he whisked 800 tourists out of harm's way in July 1997—experiencing the final collapse of the Khmer Rouge firsthand as mission director in Cambodia.

Starting new aid programs in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan—along with designing aid to restructure Eastern European economies in the early 1990s—were the most challenging tasks he faced, West said.

The former Peace Corps volunteer began



Gordon West (second from right) on a 1997 field visit in Cambodia.

his career as a capital projects and private-sector development officer in Bangladesh, Egypt, and Indonesia, before moving to a management position in Pakistan in 1989.

Having started out in Bangladesh in 1976, West returned as mission director in 1998. He found the "plight of the rural poor had improved considerably."

West visited the Iraq mission in July this year and found it "incredible how organized and effective and professional our staff is. It is an amazingly solid mission."

When he retires, West plans to start a second career with a focus on development in Asia. ★

## NAHFE Honors Gabriel Grau, EGAT Portfolio Manager

Gabriel Grau of the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade (EGAT) was honored by the National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives (NAHFE).

Grau, who is of Colombian origin, received the Foreign Affairs Service Award for "exceptional dedication and performance of his duties" carrying out development credit programs.

Grau helps implement the Development

Credit Authority, and serves as the portfolio manager for the Asia and the Near East (ANE) region.

He has been involved in the design and structuring of more than 30 development projects funded by missions across ANE and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Dozens of USAID employees, including EGAT Deputy Assistant Administrators Jay Smith and Jacqueline Schafer, attended the

NAHFE awards luncheon.

NAHFE was founded in 1994 to promote excellence among Hispanic Americans working in the federal government.

This is the second year that NAHFE has given the Foreign Affairs Recognition Award.

Nominations are made by the agencies; NAHFE selects the awardees. ★



Stavely Lord, USAID  
Gabriel Grau (left) and NAHFE President Manuel Olivarez (right).

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

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

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

### FRONTLINES EDITORIAL BOARD

**Steve Tupper**

Editor and Chief of Publications

**Ben Barber**

Editorial Director

**Kathryn Stratos**

Deputy Managing Editor

**Rebecca Gustafson**

Online Editor

**Pat Adams**

Photo Librarian

**Mary Jane Cotter**

Human Resources Coordinator and Employee Liaison

Contributing writers, editors, and staff include

**Raghu Bommasamudram, Rick Marshall**

**Kristina Stefanova, John Waggoner**

*FrontLines* correspondents and reporters include

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

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

**DCHA**—Jenny Marion; **EGAT**—Veda Lamar;

**E&E**—Sarah Berry, Brock Bierman; **EOP**—Gloria Blackwell;

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

**GH**—**Sandra Jordan**, Chris Thomas; **IG**—Donna Rosa;

**LAC**—James Carey; **LPA**—Barbara Bennett; **M**—Nancy Barnett;

**OSDBU**—LaVerne Drummond; **PPC**—Joseph Duggan;

**SEC**—Randy Streufert.

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

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

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

# Mongolia's Democracy Takes Root with U.S. Assistance

MICHAEL MIKLAUCIC

While Iraq and Afghanistan struggle to stand up democratic governments, far away in a distant part of the world a striking democratic social contract is taking hold among the people of Mongolia.

On June 27, the country held its eighth national election since emerging from communism in 1991. It is the third time that Mongolians have significantly changed their government through free elections—a claim no other Central Asian country can make.

The result is a major vindication for those who argue that democracy can take hold in non-Western cultures, and that, with modest, well-targeted support, democracies can be built in lands with no prior experience of democratic traditions.

But there is also an implicit warning that democratic transitions cannot be taken for granted.

In the 800 years since Genghis Khan united the Mongolian tribes, Mongolia has been a nomad empire, an oriental khanate, a theocracy, and a Chinese vassal state. Between 1921 and 1991, Mongolian government was modeled on the Soviet system—not the most fertile historical soil for the emergence of a vibrant democracy. For the past four years, the Mongolian Peoples' Revolutionary Party (MPRP) ruled with 72 out of 76 parliamentary seats. Critics accused the MPRP of ruling arrogantly, with blatant disregard for democratic norms. Now people have voted for change. The June 27 election results were contested in two districts because of ambiguities in election laws. But the controversy was sorted out by mid-August.

The result is an incoming parliament that will be roughly split between the MPRP and its opposition, the Motherland Democratic Party.

This coalition gives hope to observers, who believe that, by working together, the two parties may be able to address and resolve nettlesome issues—such as land privatization and electoral reform—that neither could have taken up successfully on its own.

Freedoms in Mongolia go beyond free elections. Civil liberties are widely respected: religious freedom is untrammled, and there is no ethnic strife. Mongolia has a relatively effective human rights commission, and has taken steps to improve conditions in prisons and detention centers, steps that are usually low priorities for poor countries.

USAID's democracy program over the past 13 years has supported Mongolia's democratic leaders and a nascent civil society movement. This led to the first major peaceful alternation of political power in 1996, when democratic leaders swept into power.

Since then, USAID has endeavored to ensure that elections and political processes remain competitive and supported the devel-



Jeff Goodson, USAID

*A voter looks down at his ballot.*

opment of an independent judiciary.

There can be no question that USAID has helped create effective and accountable governance in Mongolia. Competition in politics is fierce, yet nonviolent.

And with substantial support from the Agency, every Mongolian court now has a computerized case management system, every judge has a bench book of law and procedure, and soon the general public will be able to monitor the status of any case on public terminals inside the courts. The judiciary is more efficient and transparent, and the public is growing to trust and respect it.

“The judicial reform project is of critical importance to Mongolian democracy,” Mongolian President Bagabandi told USAID Administrator Natsios during a recent visit in Washington, D.C..

Despite these gains, democratic transitions cannot be taken for granted. Ochirbat, Mongolia's first president—a former communist leader who presided over Mongolia's transition to democracy—credits USAID with playing a “vital historical role in supporting the Mongolian democratic movement.”

But he also cites erosion of press freedom, corruption, and centralization of power as clear and present threats to Mongolian democracy today. “America should not stop supporting Mongolian democracy now,” he says. ★

## Jobs Key in Iraq

▲ FROM PAGE 1

employment,” said Iraq Mission Director Spike Stevenson during a recent visit to Washington, D.C.

The Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) employs an average of 40,000 Iraqis per month on short-term, labor-intensive jobs cleaning up communities and rehabilitating schools and other buildings. These activities focus on poor and conflict-prone areas.

Meanwhile, some 8,000 Iraqis have found long-term employment with contractors and subcontractors funded by the Agency. Thousands are also participating in trainings that teach job skills.

Some \$21 million in microcredit loans to small and medium-sized businesses are also creating jobs as Iraq's economy tries to get back on its feet. USAID is funding the loans through NGOs.

Some 52 percent of Iraqis are unemployed, and many of those with jobs are underemployed, working part-time or for small income. This is a particularly alarming figure, given that some 70 percent of the Iraqi population is under 25—a large labor

pool with need for economic opportunity.

“Our programs focus on creating long-term, meaningful employment,” said Nadia Dawood of the Iraq desk.

Under a new program, USAID will also work with vocational and educational centers throughout Iraq to provide job skills training and help people find work.

USAID-assisted private sector housing and commercial construction are also creating jobs, especially in urban areas. Iraq is estimated to have a housing shortage of 1 million units.

War and drought have hurt Iraq's agriculture, on which 35 percent of the population depend for a livelihood.

The Agency is therefore rehabilitating agricultural infrastructure, maintaining irrigation networks, and improving crop and livestock production technologies, focusing on the private sector. These activities will provide employment and higher incomes for the rural population and lead to sector-wide economic growth, said Doug Pool of the Iraq team. ★

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA
<p><b>Angola (Luanda)</b> Diane Swain Phone: 244-2-399-518</p> <p><b>Benin (Cotonou)</b> Rudolph Thomas Phone: 229-30-0500</p> <p><b>Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa)</b> Robert Hellyer Phone: 243-81-700-5701</p> <p><b>Eritrea (Asmara)</b> Jatinder K. Cheema Phone: 291-1-12-6546</p> <p><b>Ethiopia (Addis Ababa)</b> William Hammink Phone: 251-1-510-088</p> <p><b>Ghana (Accra)</b> Sharon L. Cromer Phone: 233-21-228-440</p> <p><b>Guinea/Sierra Leone (Conakry)</b> Annette Adams Phone: 224-41-21-63</p> <p><b>Kenya (Nairobi)</b> Kiert Toh Phone: 254-20-862-400</p> <p><b>Liberia (Monrovia)</b> Wilbur Thomas Phone: 231-226-370</p> <p><b>Madagascar (Antananarivo)</b> Stephen Haykin Phone: 261-20-22-53920</p> <p><b>Malawi (Lilongwe)</b> Roger Yochelson Phone: 265-1-772-455</p> <p><b>Mali (Bamako)</b> Pamela White Phone: 223-222-3684</p> <p><b>Mozambique (Maputo)</b> Jay L. Knott Phone: 258-1-352-000</p> <p><b>Namibia (Windhoek)</b> Gary Newton Phone: 264-61-225-935</p> <p><b>Nigeria (Abuja)</b> Dawn M. Liberi Phone: 234-09-413-8374</p> <p><b>Rwanda (Kigali)</b> Henderson Patrick Phone: 250-570-940</p> <p><b>Senegal (Dakar)</b> Olivier Carduner Phone: 221-869-6100</p> <p><b>Republic of South Africa (Pretoria)</b> Mary Lewellen (acting) Phone: 27-12-452-2000</p> <p><b>Sudan (Khartoum)</b> Allan Reed Phone: 254-286-2400</p> <p><b>Tanzania (Dar es Salaam)</b> Ray Kirkland Phone: 255-22-266-8490</p>

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA
<p><b>Uganda (Kampala)</b> Vicki Lynn Moore Phone: 256-41-387-387</p> <p><b>Zambia (Lusaka)</b> James F. Bednar Phone: 260-1-254-303</p> <p><b>Zimbabwe (Harare)</b> Paul E. Weisenfeld Phone: 263-4-250-992</p> <p><b>RCSA/Botswana (Gaborone)</b> Dawn Thomas Phone: 267-392-4449</p> <p><b>REDSO/ESA (Nairobi)</b> Andrew (Andy) Sisson Phone: 254-20-862-400</p> <p><b>WARP (Accra)</b> Carleene H. Dei Phone: 223-21-228-440</p>

ASIA AND NEAR EAST
<p><b>Afghanistan (Kabul)</b> Patrick Fine Phone: 873-762-311-955</p> <p><b>Bangladesh (Dhaka)</b> Gene George Phone: 880-2-882-4700</p> <p><b>Cambodia (Phnom Penh)</b> Jonathan Addleton Phone: 855-23-218-074</p> <p><b>East Timor (Dili)</b> James Lehman (Acting) Phone: 62-21-344-2211</p> <p><b>Egypt (Cairo)</b> Kenneth Ellis Phone: 2-02-522-7000</p> <p><b>India (New Delhi)</b> Walter North Phone: 91-11-2419-8000</p> <p><b>Indonesia (Jakarta)</b> William Frej Phone: 62-21-3435-9300</p> <p><b>Iraq (Baghdad)</b> Spike Stephenson Phone: 202-216-6289</p> <p><b>Jordan (Amman)</b> Anne Aarnes Phone: 962-6-590-6000</p> <p><b>Lebanon (Beirut)</b> Raouf Youssef Phone: 961-4-542-600</p> <p><b>Mongolia (Ulaanbaatar)</b> Leon Waskin Phone: 976-11-312-384</p> <p><b>Morocco (Rabat)</b> Monica Stein-Olson Phone: 212-37-63-2010</p> <p><b>Nepal (Kathmandu)</b> Donald Clark Phone: 977-1-427-0144</p>

ASIA AND NEAR EAST
<p><b>Pakistan (Islamabad)</b> Lisa Chiles Phone: 92-51-826-161</p> <p><b>The Philippines (Manila)</b> Michael Yates Phone: 632-552-9800</p> <p><b>RDM/ASIA/Thailand (Bangkok)</b> Timothy Beans Phone: 662-205-5301</p> <p><b>Sri Lanka (Colombo)</b> Carol Becker Phone: 941-472-847</p> <p><b>West Bank/Gaza (Tel Aviv)</b> James A. Bever Phone: 972-3-511-4848</p> <p><b>Yemen (Sanaa)</b> Douglas Heisler Phone: 967-1-303-155 x2197</p>

EUROPE AND EURASIA
<p><b>Albania (Tirana)</b> Harry Birnholz Phone: 355-4-266-395</p> <p><b>Armenia (Yerevan)</b> Robin Phillips Phone: 3741-569-656</p> <p><b>Bosnia-Herzegovina (Sarajevo)</b> Howard J. Sumka Phone: 387-33-702-300</p> <p><b>Bulgaria (Sofia)</b> Debra Dewitt McFarland Phone: 359-2-951-5381</p> <p><b>Croatia (Zagreb)</b> William Jeffers Phone: 385-1-661-2103</p> <p><b>Georgia/Azerbaijan (Tbilisi)</b> Denny Robertson Phone: 995-32-77-8540</p> <p><b>Kazakhstan/Kyrgyzstan/Tajikistan/Turkmenistan/Uzbekistan (Almaty)</b> George Deikun Phone: 7-3272-50-7612</p> <p><b>Kosovo (Pristina)</b> Ken Yamashita Phone: 381-38-243-673</p> <p><b>Macedonia (Skopje)</b> Richard Goldman Phone: 389-2-308-0446</p> <p><b>Romania (Bucharest)</b> Rodger Garner Phone: 40-21-410-1222</p> <p><b>Russia (Moscow)</b> Terry Myers Phone: 7-095-728-5000</p> <p><b>Serbia and Montenegro (Belgrade)</b> Keith Simmons Phone: 381-11-361-9344</p>

EUROPE AND EURASIA
<p><b>Ukraine/Belarus/Moldova (Kiev)</b> Christopher Crowley Phone: 380-4-446-25678</p> <p><b>RSC/Hungary (Budapest)</b> Ray Kirkland Phone: 361-475-4604</p>

LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN
<p><b>Bolivia (La Paz)</b> Liliana Ayalde Phone: 591-2-278-6399</p> <p><b>Brazil (Brasilia)</b> Richard Goughnour Phone: 55-61-321-7248</p> <p><b>Colombia (Bogota)</b> J. Michael Deal Phone: 571-423-6880</p> <p><b>Dominican Republic (Santo Domingo)</b> Elena Brineman Phone: 809-221-1100</p> <p><b>Ecuador (Quito)</b> Lars Klassen Phone: 593-2-223-2100</p> <p><b>El Salvador (San Salvador)</b> Mark Silverman Phone: 503-234-1666</p> <p><b>Guatemala (Guatemala City)</b> Glenn Anders Phone: 502-332-0202</p> <p><b>Guyana (Georgetown)</b> Mike E. Sarhan Phone: 592-22-57315</p> <p><b>Haiti (Port-au-Prince)</b> Erna Kerst Phone: 509-222-5500</p> <p><b>Honduras (Tegucigalpa)</b> Paul Tuebner Phone: 504-236-9320</p> <p><b>Jamaica (Kingston)</b> Karen Turner Phone: 876-926-3645</p> <p><b>Mexico (Mexico City)</b> Edward Kadunc Phone: 52-55-5080-2000</p> <p><b>Nicaragua (Managua)</b> James "Jim" Vermillion Phone: 505-2-670502</p> <p><b>Panama (Panama City)</b> Leopoldo Garza Phone: 507-263-6011</p> <p><b>Paraguay (Asuncion)</b> Wayne Nilsstuen Phone: 595-21-213-727</p> <p><b>Peru (Lima)</b> Hilda (Bambi) Arellano Phone: 511-618-1200</p>

Mailing addresses for USAID missions: <http://www.usaid.gov/locations/missiondirectory.html>

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS			
<p><b>U.S. Delegation to the OECD (Paris)</b> George Carner Phone: 33-1-4524-7434</p>	<p><b>U.S. Embassy to Japan (Tokyo)</b> <b>Counselor for Development Cooperation</b> Charles Aanenson Phone: 81-3-3224-5015</p>	<p><b>The U.S. Mission to the European Union (Brussels)</b> Patricia Lerner Phone: 322-508-2636</p>	<p><b>The U.S. Mission to the United Nations (Geneva)</b> Nance Klyoh Phone: 41-22-749-4402</p>

# USAID Reaches Out, Gears Up For New Generation of Staff

Twenty-one people were sworn in as foreign service officers September 7, bringing the number of career officers joining USAID in 2004 up to 88. Another 85 candidates were selected for five-year appointments.

"It is so energizing to see new people just as enthusiastic and excited about working for USAID as we were 30 years ago," said Cecilia Pitas of the Office of Human Resources (HR), who heads foreign service recruitment.

The Agency is recruiting a record number of people in 2004 to replace its many retirees and increase staff size by 50. But getting them on board can be a long, complex process.

"It takes approximately a year to bring people on board, with a good chunk of that for medical and security clearance," said Joe Dorsey, a foreign service officer with HR.

The current recruitment drive started in earnest in 2004, when Congress authorized additional staff. Promoting the Agency as an employer and streamlining application reviews became priorities, said Pat Brown, deputy director of the Office of Human Resources.

On the civil service side, Brown set up a system within HR for tracking exactly how many days each step of reviewing and selecting applicants takes. Now he and others in HR can see exactly where filling an individual vacancy stands.

"Until you see how the process is working, you don't know where your bottlenecks are," Brown said. With changes in place, getting vacancy notices out now takes 66 percent less time and certifying qualified applicants a third less time. Setting up small, specialized recruitment teams made the system more efficient. Learning to better use the new automated recruitment system helped too.

To attract applicants, staff from HR and the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs (EOP) are attending scores of job fairs at universities and professional associations this year and next. Sometimes they ask other career employees who are alumni to



A new class of new entry professionals and international development interns was sworn in by Deputy Administrator Fred Schieck September 7. Pictured in the front row are Michael Johnson, James Carlson, and George Zarycky. Behind them, left to right, are Andrew Maybrook, Andrew Rebold, Amy Paro, James Gultry, Thomas LeBlanc, Kent Howard, Lorraine Sherman, Robert Lopez, Nils Mueller; Dora Plavetic, Lloyd Jackson, Nancy Eslick, Melissa Janis, Kevin Smith, Mary Skarie, Amy Meyer, and Adriana Barel.

accompany them.

"If people don't know about you, they won't come to you," said Director Jessalyn Pendarvis, director of EOP, which is currently focused on increasing the overall number of Hispanics in the Agency workforce and the representation of African Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and women in upper ranks.

"I think AID is one of the best kept secrets," she added.

With the new electronic application system, Pendarvis hopes to learn if certain minority groups are applying to the Agency and, if they are, where in the process they might be getting left behind.

Applications are screened electronically before HR and technical specialists look at

them and select candidates to interview.

"When you sift through the résumés and meet people in person, you can't help but be impressed. There are some pretty sharp people," said Dorsey.

Civil service recruitment happens as vacancies occur, although USAID also participates in the federal government's Presidential Management Fellowship (PMF, previously PMI) program. PMFs are recent master's graduates.

USAID recruits junior foreign service officers into its International Development Internship (IDI) program from the nation's graduate schools as well.

To select new foreign service officers, HR uses a three-part interview system—a written exercise, an interview, and a group exercise in which five finalists discuss how

to deal with a fictional scenario.

"They don't know each other and have to come up with a solution in a short amount of time. It gives you just a little snapshot of people's interpersonal and leadership skills," said HR's Barbara Ellington-Banks, who worked with the Office of Personnel Management to adapt the system to USAID's needs.

"It makes so much sense, because one of the biggest things we do is work in teams," Ellington-Banks said.

Once the panels select candidates, the Agency asks for references. Through reference checks and the security clearance process, the Agency confirms that candidates represented their educational and professional backgrounds accurately. ★

