

IMAGERY

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS



OLAV SALTBERG/WORLD FOOD PROGRAM

World Food Program (WFP) workers in Malawi scale a giant stack of food bags provided by the U.S. Government through the U.S. Agency for International Development. The U.S. is the largest single donor to WFP, providing more than 56 percent of the cash and commodities contributed to the U.N. agency in 2003.



IMAGERY USAGE

Imagery is an integral and vital part of USAID communications. Visual imagery—specifically photography—conveys the spirit and energy of our efforts. The type of imagery that dramatizes our daily activities is called documentary, and it has a journalistic feel.

Since imagery will be used in applications from print to the Web, we must ensure that it consistently captures the best of our work and showcases our success. Following our guidelines will ensure that our communications have a recognizable look.

When preparing or selecting imagery, keep in mind these guidelines:

- Focus on positive aspects of USAID efforts.
- Demonstrate “aid in action.”
- Ensure relevancy to story.
- Include “who, what, when, where, and why” of photos in captions.
- Credit the photographer.
- Show people looking at camera, whenever possible, to connect emotionally with readers.
- Select images that are in focus and that are colorful and bright.
- Request digital photos be shot with at least a 3-megapixel resolution, original files at least 2000 pixels by 1500 pixels, high-quality JPEG or TIFF format, RGB color mode. Offset printed images should be at least 300 pixels per inch and either CMYK or grayscale color mode.

These imagery guidelines can also be provided to photographers to help them create original imagery for USAID.

Please also consult Section 7 for a more complete understanding of how to use imagery in designs and layouts.



MAKE AN EMOTIONAL CONNECTION

An image like this immediately conveys the positive impact U.S. assistance has had on this family. Including the identity on the building in the background is an effective way to tell the story with a minimal number of words.



SHOW POSITIVE BENEFITS

You can feel the positive energy of the Palestinian youth in this photo, a striking contrast to the many negative images of boys in Ramallah. While the USAID-donated computer is visible in the shot, the boys are the subject. The photo looks natural not staged.

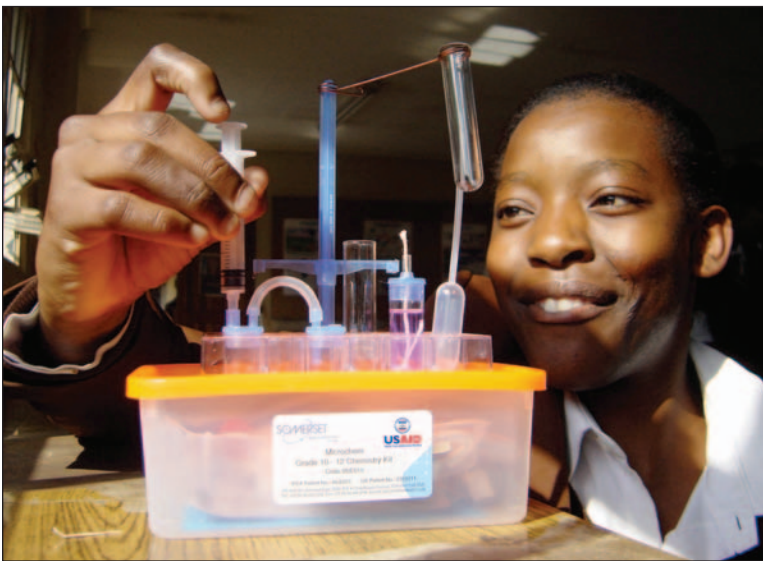


FOCUS ON SUCCESS

It is important to show stories in context, and that our investment is paying off. Here a farmer inspects his sorghum. His fields look full and the plants are healthy, thanks to USAID-funded research centers that help farmers fight diseases and insects that threaten crops.



ESTABLISH THE QUANTITY OF ASSISTANCE
 The massive amount of assistance delivered globally by the U.S. Government is an important message. Showing the assistance visually is the most dramatic way to convey the sheer quantity. In this image, food aid is being distributed to people in Afghanistan, helping to avoid a famine.



DEMONSTRATE PERSONAL IMPACT
 Focusing on individuals who have benefited from U.S. assistance will connect with the reader in a meaningful way. You can feel the joy this young woman is experiencing from a USAID-funded science kit. A great photo and a good caption can tell the whole story.



SHOW THE BRAND IN CONTEXT
 Our brand is the representation of the goodwill of the American people. It is important to show the brand in context. An example is shown on the plastic sheeting in this image.

“USAID helped me get a job.”



USE SILHOUETTES FOR IMPACT

A silhouette is a photograph—generally of a person or object—that is carefully retouched to remove its background. This technique allows the audience to focus on the intended subject matter. This technique should be used sparingly, so that silhouetted images remain effective. Generally, it is desirable to place a silhouetted image against a plain background, to maintain a clean design.

Silhouettes of beneficiaries should be paired with powerful quotes about U.S. assistance.



COLOR COUNTS

Images should be visually appealing. Bright colors help the reader feel the moment and make our publications more dynamic. Photos are the way to add colors outside of the palette to our communications.



CROP FOR CLOSEUP

Good pictures have a clear subject. Cropping images makes them more dramatic and eliminates distracting backgrounds that may not be relevant. The children here almost jump off the page to greet you.

INCORRECT IMAGERY USAGE

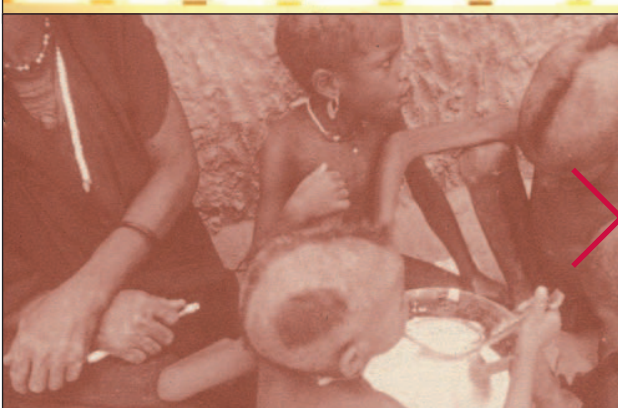
Although using imagery to support your messages is strongly recommended, using an image that is unclear, either in terms of quality or subject matter, may hamper the clarity of your message and cause harm to the USAID brand. If no high-quality, clear, and powerful image is available, it may be better to create a design that is built around typographic treatments, rather than a layout that relies on photography.



AVOID STAGNANT SHOTS OF BUILDINGS



AVOID PHOTOS OF PANEL DISCUSSIONS, MEETINGS, AND CONFERENCES, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE FOCUS IS NOT ON THE PEOPLE



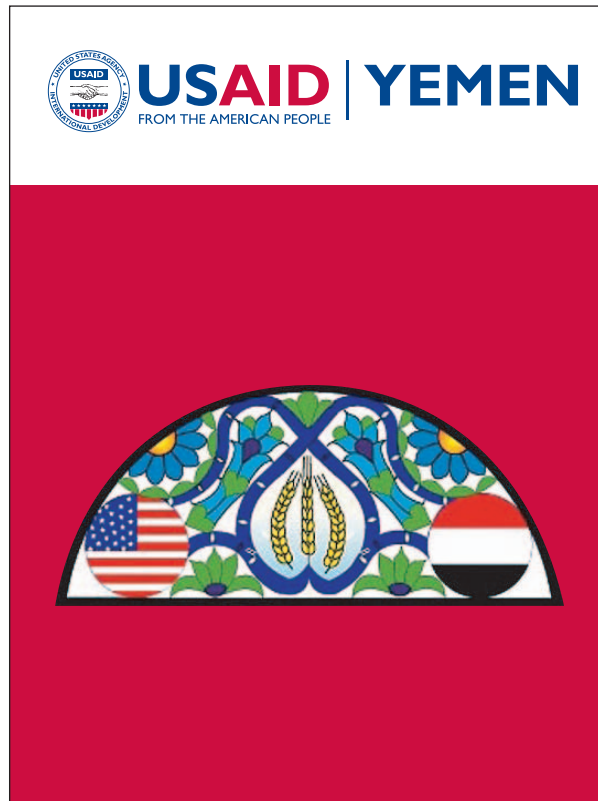
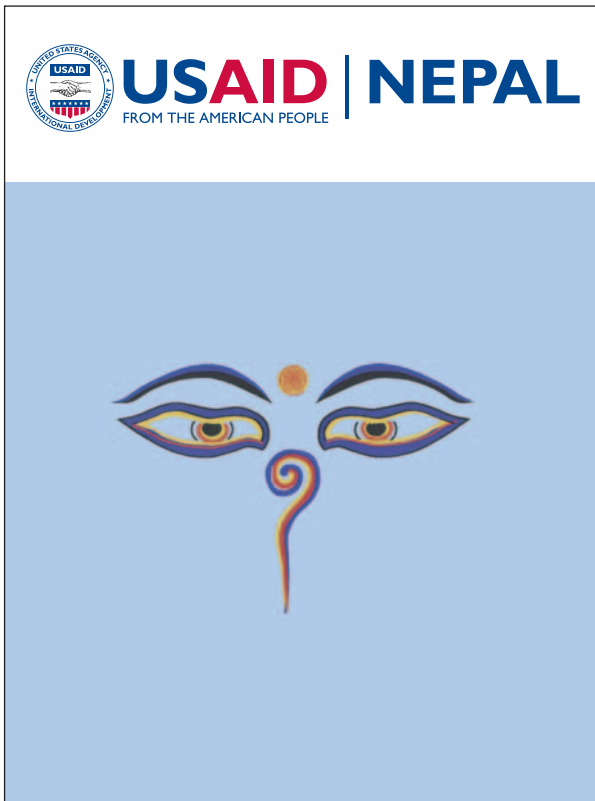
AVOID DUOTONE PHOTOS AND IMAGES THAT SHOWCASE DESPAIR



AVOID PHOTOS IN WHICH THE ACTIVITY IS UNCLEAR, NO EMOTION IS DISPLAYED, OR THE INDIVIDUALS PICTURED ARE MERELY STANDING IN FRONT OF A SIGN

LOCAL COLOR

When producing materials for in-country use, it may be desirable to use illustrations or images that relate directly to local culture. This practice is strongly encouraged, but to ensure brand consistency, it is important that all brand guidelines be followed and that these types of images are treated in the same manner as a photograph, or other supporting art, in terms of the use of the grids and other design guidelines. Each of the examples below uses a local graphic element to add cultural relativity to its respective design. Each adheres to all graphic standards. (Examples shown here may not have been produced.)



The image shows the USAID | TURKMENISTAN logo at the top left, featuring the USAID seal and the text "USAID | TURKMENISTAN FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE". Below the logo is a map of Turkmenistan and a vertical column of small icons. The main content is titled "THE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE" and "PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS".

THE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

Turkmenistan showed no signs of improvement over previous years in economic and democratic reform during 2003. Civil society groups face almost impossible registration rules. While civic action remains risky, NGOs have been able to advocate for small-scale change at the local level. Public education continues to be severely cut. The decline of the education system, which reduced mandatory schooling from 11 to nine years, has left parents enraged about what the future holds for their children. A puppet judiciary follows the will of the President and is unprepared to protect civil and commercial rights. The government controls all media except the mushrooming satellite dishes outside apartments and houses. Private sector growth continues to lag, and over the year, no progress was made to stimulate change in the economy. An estimated 58% of the population lives below the poverty line and GDP per capita income is \$649. Although small enterprises report that they are able to work with little impediment, they are unable to expand and offer greater employment opportunities. One sector where the government has demonstrated promise for reform is in health, though the situation remains poor. USAID's program focuses on human capital development, looking to increase the skills and capabilities critical to providing the next generation of civil society actors, entrepreneurs, and health care providers increased capacity to bring Turkmenistan into the modern world.

PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

- USAID provided funding for a legal resource center at Turkmen State University, which provides valuable legal resources to over 8,000 students, lawyers, and legal professors that visited the center. USAID helped create the Turkmen Young Lawyers Association. Members of the association will work with USAID to provide pro-bono legal services to Turkmen citizens in the areas of family law, property law, and other civil law matters.
- The USAID-funded "Keeping Children Healthy" awareness campaign resulted in nearly 100% of mothers knowing all key messages of the campaign, including the warning signs for when to take a child to a health care provider.
- At the high school level, Junior Achievement developed new textbooks with Turkmen-specific case studies and trained teachers to implement basic economics education. Eighty-six courses were delivered and over 1,500 entrepreneurs were trained on basic business.

Key Facts:

- Capital: Ashgabat
- Population: 5.5 million (2001)
- GDP(current US\$): \$5,962 million (2001)
- Population below national poverty line: 7% (2001)
- GDP per capita (current US\$): \$1,083 (2001)
- GDP per capita (purchasing power parity): \$4,700 (2001)
- Religion: Muslim (89%), Eastern Orthodox (9%)
- Language: Turkmen (72%), Russian (12%), Uzbek (9%), other (7%)
- President: Saparmurad Niyazov
- Chairman of Supreme Council: Owezgeldy Ataev
- Ambassador to US: Mered Orazov

For more information, see www.usaid.gov
Keyword: Central Asia

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CONTINUES >

When choosing a local illustration, or other graphic, it is recommended that one consider complementary color, unobtrusive shape, appropriate size, and the overall balance within a given layout

At left, an example of a local motif has been added at the bottom of a document that is designed to meet graphic standards. The result is a pleasing layout that meets standards and incorporates local color.

